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FREE ASPEN COMIC BOOK

ASPEN UNIVERSE DECIMATION



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ASPEN UNIVERSE DECIMATION

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Regular Edition
by - **OSCAR BAZALDUA
& - FEDERICO BLEE**

YOU KNOW
THAT FEELING
WHEN YOU CAN'T GET
A SONG OUT OF
YOUR HEAD?

PERHAPS, IT IS A
SONG YOU ENJOY-- MAYBE A
CATCHY TUNE THAT YOU CAN'T
STAND BUT MAYBE SECRETLY
YOU DO? WE'VE ALL BEEN
THERE, AM I RIGHT?

YET, SOMETIMES...
THE LYRICS PIERCE
YOUR SKULL WITH A
MADDENING REPETITION
THAT CAN ONLY BE
DESCRIBED AS...

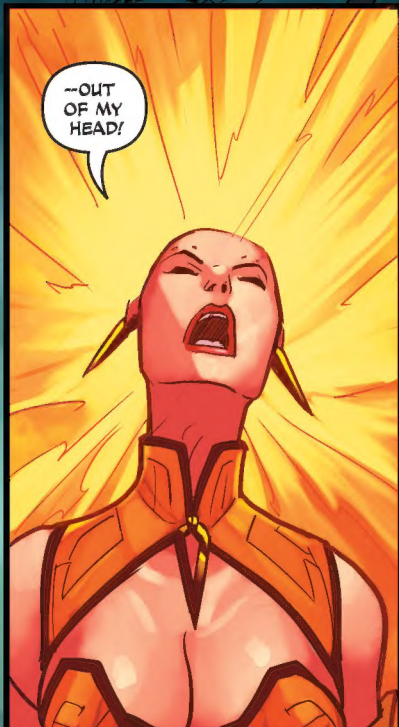


...TORTUROUS?

I KNOW, WHAT A HELLUVA THING TO SAY TO YOU WHEN YOU'RE HOOKED UP LIKE THIS.

BUT, I TELL YOU, *SUDANA*... I JUST CAN'T GET THESE WORDS--

--OUT OF MY HEAD!



AH! SO THERE'S LIFE IN YOU, AFTER ALL.



WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LIFE, *EMBER*?

DO SPEAK UP.

YOU WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND EVEN IF I EXPLAINED IT TO YOU.



TRY ME. YOU'D BE SURPRISED WHAT I KNOW.

BUT I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING I *DO* KNOW-- I HAVE HEARD OF SOMEONE THEY CALL...



...A
VANISHER.



WHY ARE
YOU DOING
THIS?

WHY DO
ANYTHING?

THAT'S
NOT AN
ANSWER.

I'M SORRY.
THIS ISN'T GOING
TO BE A DEBATE. YOU
HAVE SOMETHING IN THAT
PRETTY LITTLE HEAD
OF YOURS THAT
I NEED.

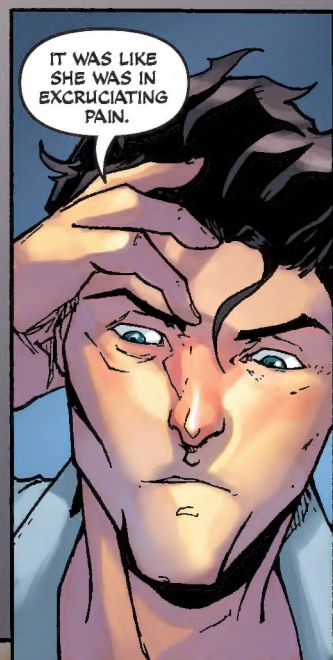


AND YOU HAVE
NO IDEA THE TROUBLE
I HAD TO GO THROUGH TO
FIND THIS PRIMITIVE MAGICAL
DEVICE. THEY DON'T JUST
SELL THESE AT THE LOCAL
CONVENIENCE STORE
YOU KNOW?

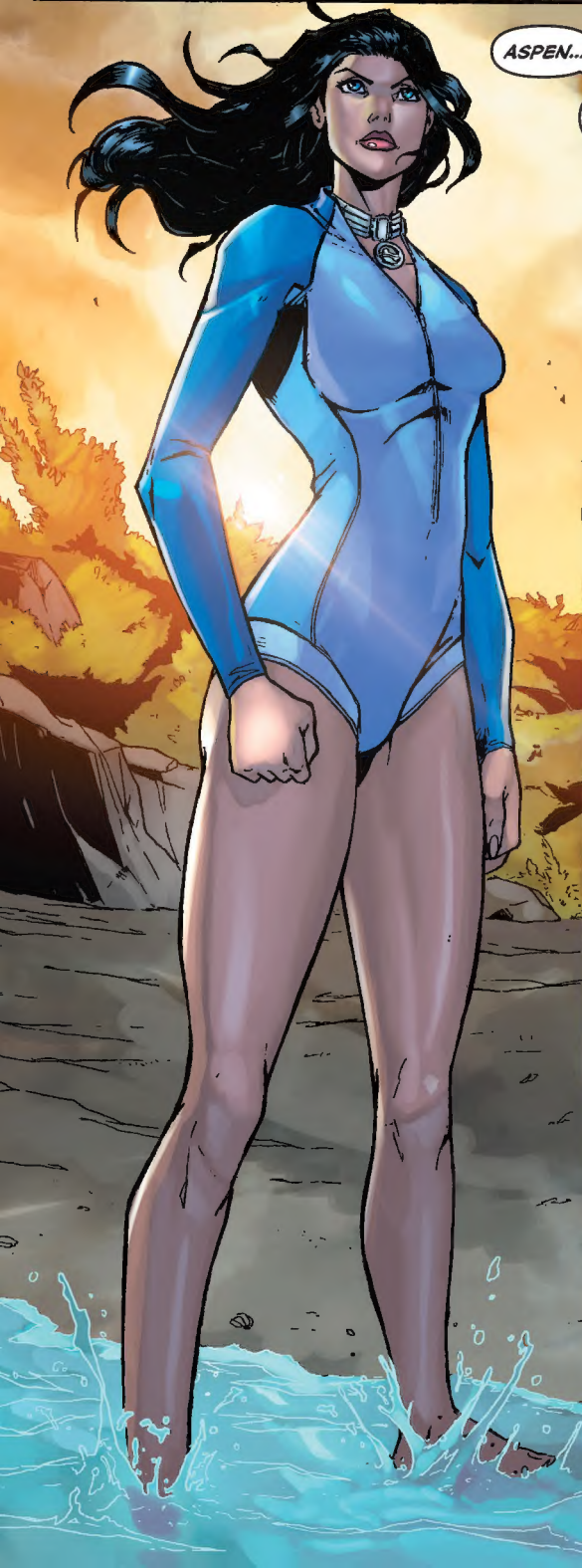
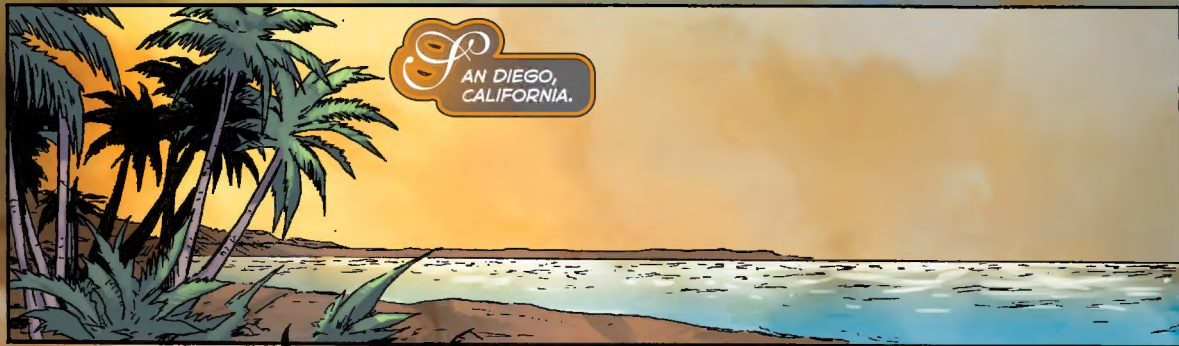
LET'S SEE
WHAT THIS
DOES.



'ATTA
GIRL...







ASPEN...

WHAT IS IT?

THE OCEAN.
I CAN SENSE IT.
IT FEELS...



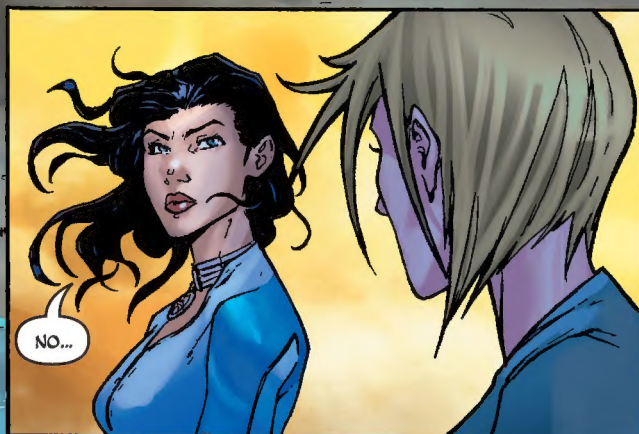
COLD.



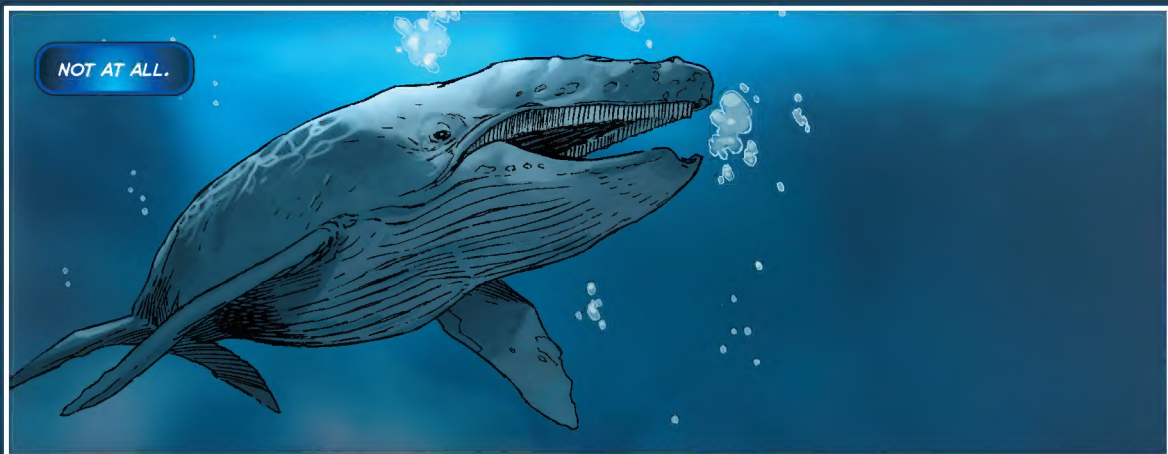
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

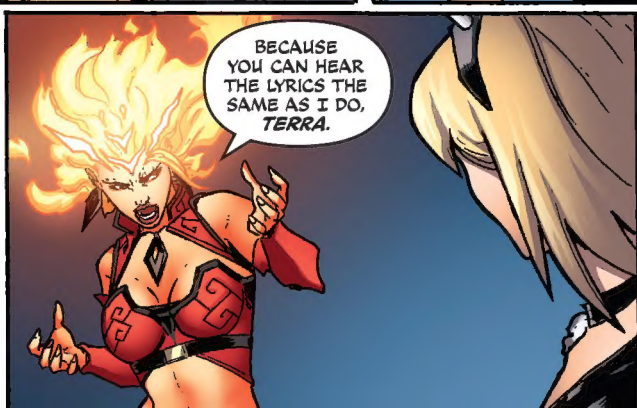
JUST AN ODD SENSE IS ALL. SOMETHING FEELS...OFF. LIKE THE WATER ITSELF IS CALLING OUT TO ME FOR HELP.

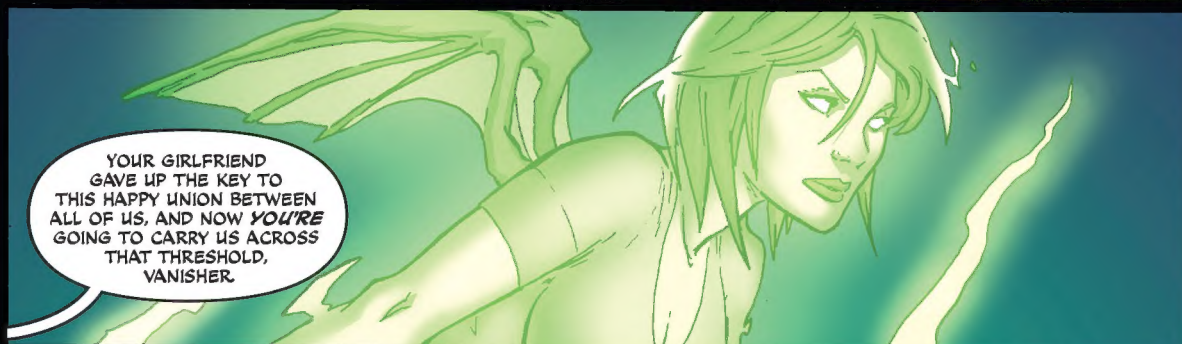
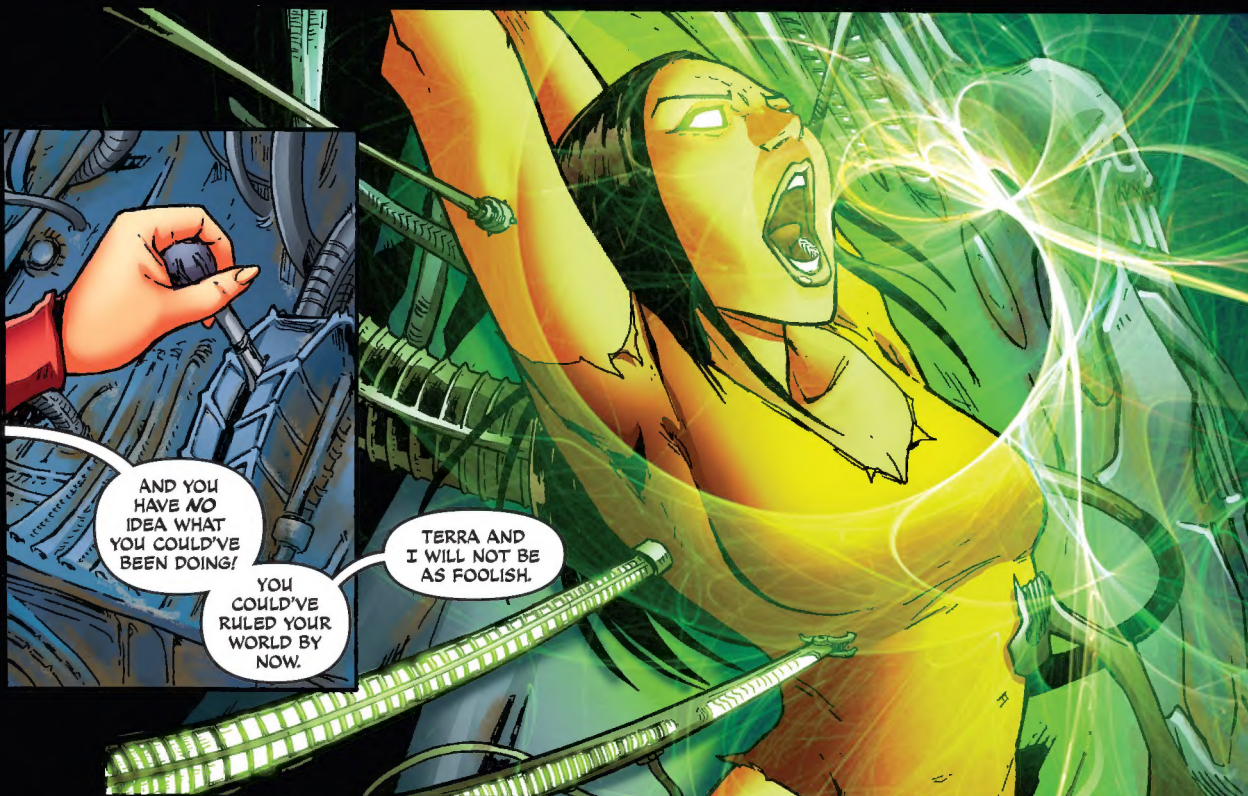
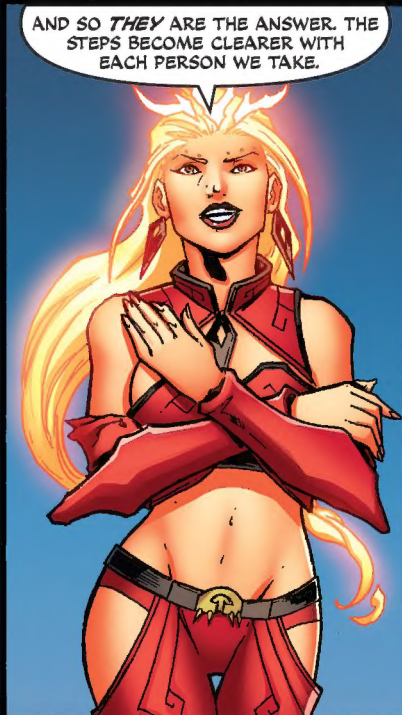
THAT DOESN'T SOUND GOOD.



NO...









I TAKE IT I CAN'T PERSUADE YOU BOTH OUT OF THIS INSANE IDEA WITH SOME FREE CASINO BUFFET VOUCHERS INSTEAD?

HANDS OUT, PERFORMER.



WHAT ABOUT HER?



SHE'LL BE FINE. WHEN WE RETURN, IT'LL BE LIKE NO TIME HAS PASSED.

DID YOU SAY... TIME?

GREAT. MAYBE WE'LL GO BACKWARDS AND I CAN WIPE AWAY US EVER MEETING.

KIDDING. KIDDING. I LIKE OUR SOULS AS IS. THANK YOU.

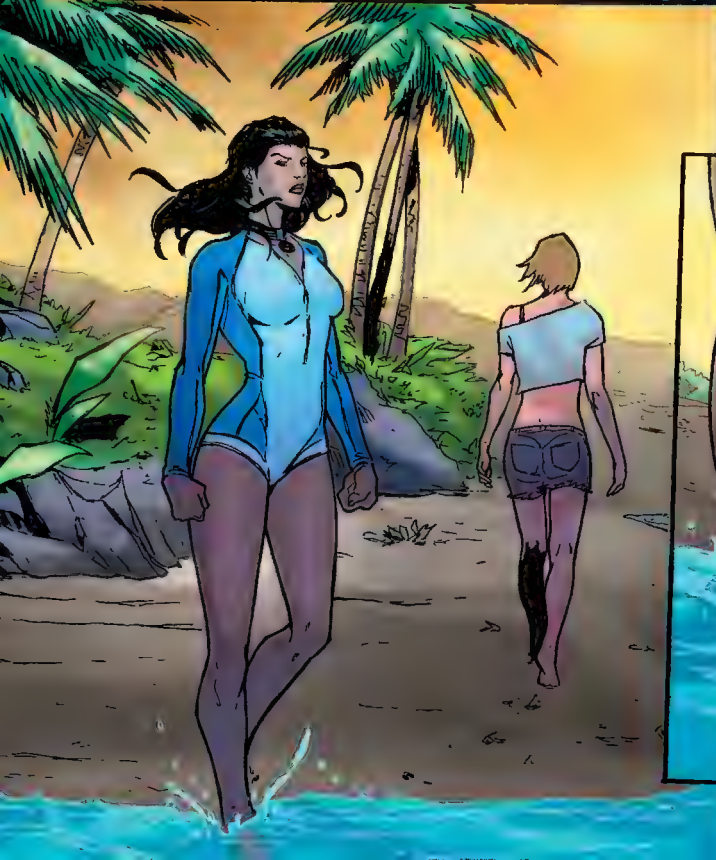
YOU *SHOULD* BE THANKFUL. OUR PAST SELVES WEREN'T QUITE SO PATIENT WITH THOSE WE NEEDED TO EXPLOIT. GET IT OVER WITH...

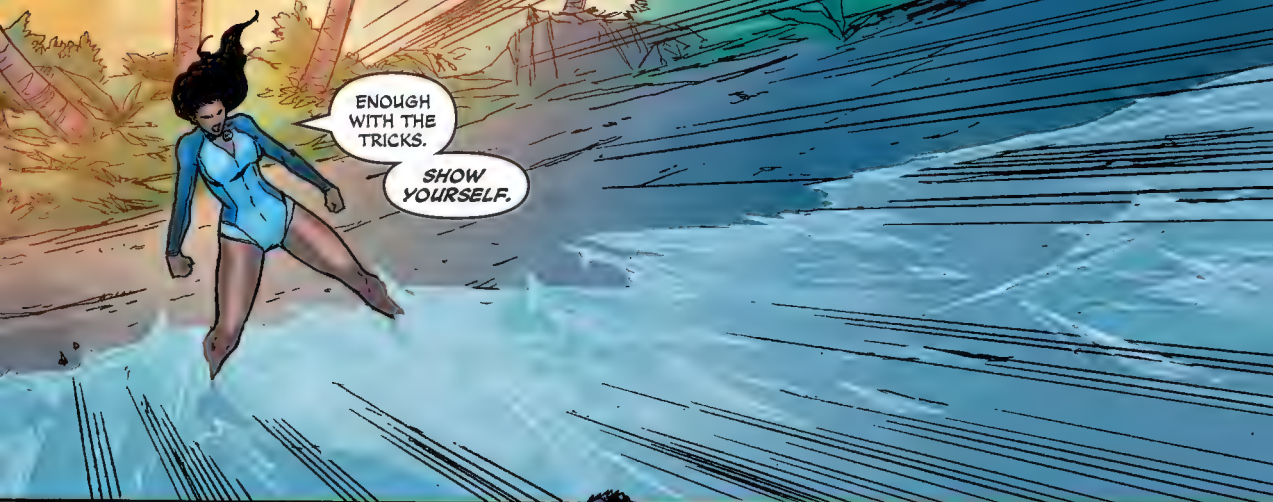


PATIENCE? WHERE WE'RE GOING... WE DON'T NEED PATIENCE!

ANYONE...? OKAY. THAT WAS A LONG SHOT. MY BAD.

NOT NOW, HANK.





ENOUGH
WITH THE
TRICKS.

SHOW
YOURSELF.



I NEVER
WAS ONE FOR
THEATRICS-- THAT IS
WHAT YOU CALL
IT, CORRECT?

I USED TO
INCESSANTLY STUDY
YOUR CIVILIZATION'S MANY
PETTY CONTRIVANCES. YOU
FASCINATED ME FOR
A TIME.



YOU
CLEARLY
DIDN'T STUDY
UP ON THE
GREETING
PART.

YOU ALSO
MUST KNOW--
IF YOU'RE HERE
LOOKING FOR ME--
THAT I'M NOT
ONLY JUST A
HUMAN.



OH... I HAVE HEARD MUCH OF
YOUR TALES OF LORE ABOVE
AND BELOW. PARTICULARLY
YOUR STRIFE WITH THE
DISSIDENT'S DAUGHTER.

KIANI.

IT WILL BE
THE ONLY
REASON I
SPARE YOU.



SPARE ME
FROM WH--

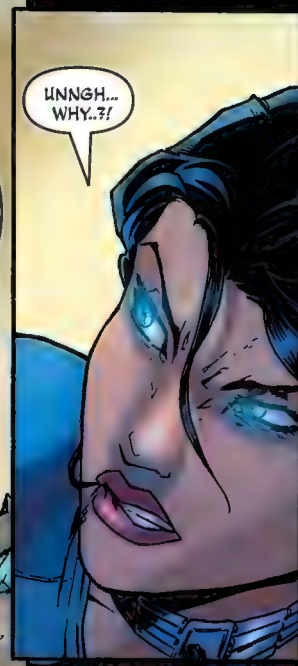




YOU HAVE A WARRIOR'S SPIRIT. I ADMIRE THAT.

BUT, YOU ARE NO WARRIOR.

I AM **TERZA** OF THE ASCYLIAN LINEAGE-- I HAVE SPARRED WITH THE GREATEST FIGHTERS IN THE DEEPEST CITIES OF THE BLUE. THIS IS NOT A FIGHT YOU WANT.



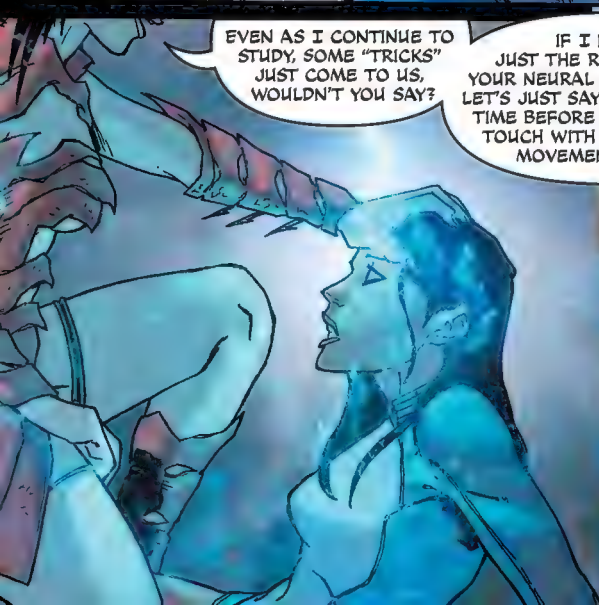
UNNGH... WHY.?!



THAT QUESTION IS NOT FOR US TO ASK. CAN'T YOU FEEL IT INSIDE YOUR HEAD? THE LYRICS? EACH WORD POUNDING LIKE A DRUM. INCHING US CLOSER TO ACTIONS WE HAVE NO SWAY OVER?



BESIDES, I HAVE BEEN GIVEN A SECOND CHANCE AND I INTEND TO TAKE IT.

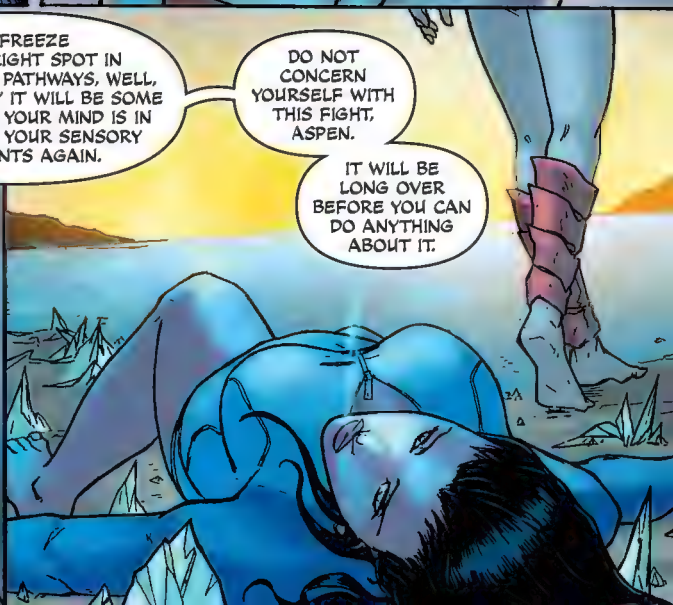


EVEN AS I CONTINUE TO STUDY, SOME "TRICKS" JUST COME TO US, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

IF I FREEZE JUST THE RIGHT SPOT IN YOUR NEURAL PATHWAYS, WELL, LET'S JUST SAY IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE YOUR MIND IS IN TOUCH WITH YOUR SENSORY MOVEMENTS AGAIN.

DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THIS FIGHT, ASPEN.

IT WILL BE LONG OVER BEFORE YOU CAN DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.





THE FUTURE.
AWESOME.
FLYING CARS.
CALLED IT,
DOC.

SERIOUSLY,
HANK-- ENOUGH
WITH THE MOVIE
QUOTES.



I AM
IMPRESSED.
EMBER, YOU
DELIVERED AS
EXPECTED,
AND *WHEN*
EXPECTED.

I'VE HAD AN
INFINITE LIFETIME
OF DOUBTERS,
EVAN! BUT, HERE
WE ARE.



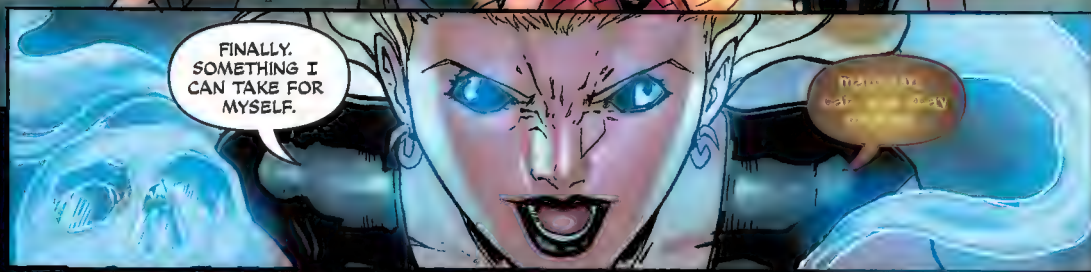
A COLLECTIVE
GROUP OF STRANGERS
PULLED AS STRINGS OF
A PUPPET, WOULDN'T
YOU SAY?

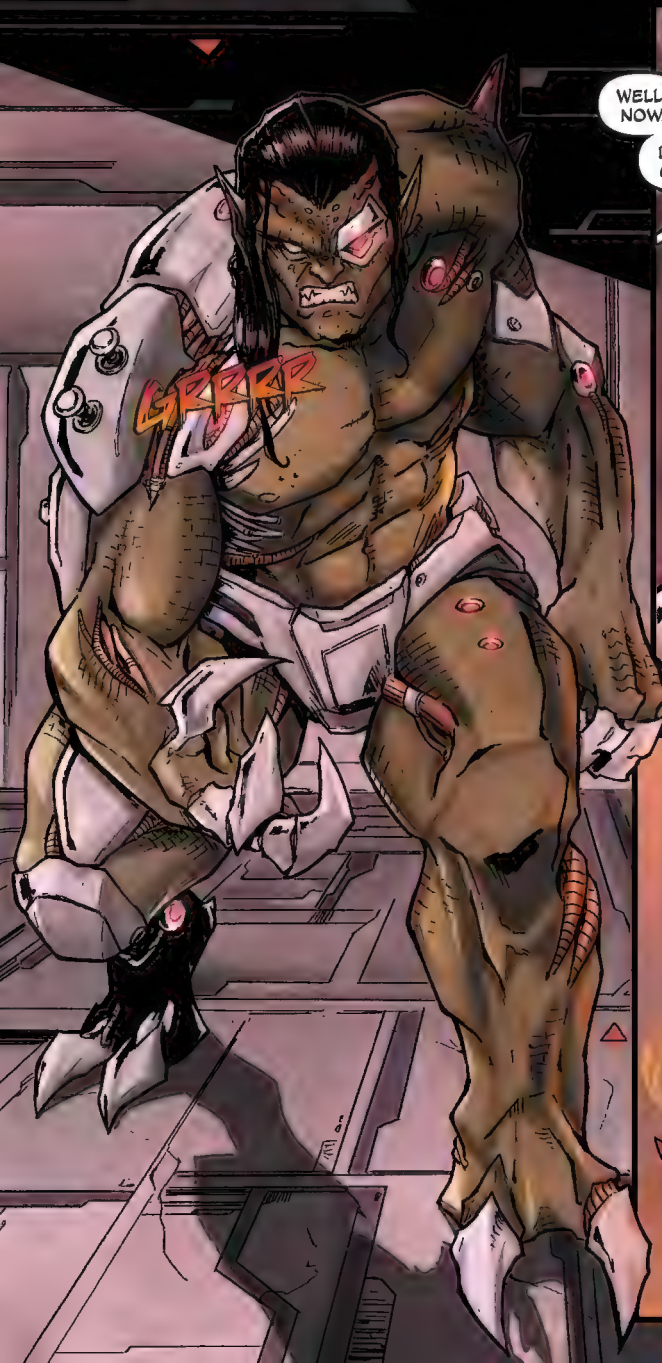


I HAVE
NEVER BEEN MUCH
FOR WORDS. I THOUGHT
THERE WOULD BE SOME
TYPE OF SECURITY
INVOLVED?



OH,
THEY HAVE
BEEN HERE
SINCE WE
ARRIVED...









SO
YOUNG.



THE PERFECT
CANDIDATE...



TO BE CONTINUED IN
**ASPEN UNIVERSE:
DECIMATION #1**
IN STORES THIS FALL

ASPEN UNIVERSE DECIMATION



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#1
OF 4



RENNA
AFTER
KHARY RANDOLPH

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HARVEY MUIRBAO



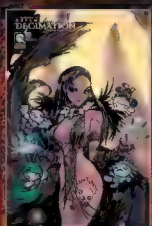
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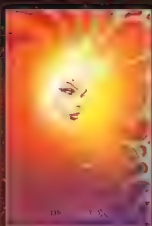
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digi-inks
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color artists
Federico Blee
& **John Starr** (pgs 5, 8, 9, 15-18)

lettering
Zen

PREVIOUSLY:

Ember Silva, along with Terra and the sorceress, Evani, kidnapped Las Vegas magician Hank Medley and his cat Sparkles in order to use his magical vanishing ability to arrive in San Francisco in the future. There, the group attacked Rainier Tower and freed his cherished prisoner, Jayden. Meanwhile, Terza, rogue warrior of The Blue, rose from the depths of the ocean and incapacitated the powerful Aspen Matthews with a frozen mind tap on the shores of San Diego. Yet, the group as a whole was still uncertain as to the true cause of the mystical lyrics binding their minds together and forcing their actions—the powerful mind control of Orlana, the Death Princess...

ORLANA AKA: THE DEATH PRINCESS



Her conquest to rule the Earth using her ability to control minds failed once prior, yet not before the combined might of magic's greatest forces nearly reached their breaking point. The wizard Kon personally saw to her captivity within a slave camp, yet her devastating powers can never truly be diminished.

TERRA



The balance of good and evil requires a faithful demigod of death capable of feeding the seeds of chaos and ushering souls into the afterlife—or for her own keeping. Terra is the catalyst for Dellec's quest of vengeance as she ripped the heart from his wife's body as he bore witness, forging a path of blood and souls that continues today.

JAYDEN



After serving as a wedge between Malikai and Sonia's relationship, and eventually outcast from the group due to her malicious activities, Jayden was unknowingly trapped by the authorities and ultimately captured by Rainier's bounty hunter, Blackjack. Once under his control, she became a conduit for all of his torturous experiments.

TERZA



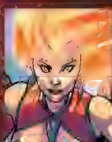
A fierce Ascylian warrior that served under the sinister Biranha, Terza's naiveté has been both her blessing and curse, as her willingness to plunge into battle nearly saved her city as it crumbled all around her, yet caused her to be captured and kept in stasis as the city's spiritual savior.

EVANI



Little is known about the powerful necromancer, Evani, beyond her inherent ability to resuscitate the dead. However, her powers have not been used for virtue, as she betrayed Miya and utilized her dead father Noris' soul to fuel a monstrous dragon creature as part of the witch Nisaba's plan to destroy the amazon warrior once and for all.

EMBER SILVA



A "Half-breed" of both Elysian and Nefarian descent, Ember Silva discovered the dark and ugly side of politics firsthand as she was forced to create a false fear of humans in order to get elected as the leader of Perspecta. Her lies soon caught up to her, as she was forced out of office and exiled until her eventual rise and return as the ruler of Nefario. That is, until a young boy named Theo has thrown her rule into a tailspin.

No Soul in the Aspen Universe is Safe!

*Fathom & Soulfire created by Michael Turner | Shrugged created by Michael Turner & Frank Mastromauro
Dellec created by Frank Mastromauro & Vince Hernandez | Charismagic created by Vince Hernandez*

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THIS IS THE WAY
THE WORLD ENDS.

NOT WITH
A BANG BUT
A WHIMPER...

...I ONLY WISH THOSE
WORDS WERE TRUE IN
THIS INSTANCE...



THERE MOST
DEFINITELY
WAS A BANG.



AND
TERROR...



AND...I
HELPED.

AND
DESTRUCTION...

ONE DAY EARLIER. THE YEAR 2211.

SHE
WILL DO
PERFECTLY.

SO, WAIT--
LEMME GET THIS
STRAIGHT.

YOU KIDNAP AND
TORTURE SUDANA,
AND US, FORCE ME
TO TELEPORT EVERYONE
HERE INTO THE FUTURE,
ALL TO FREE SOME
YOUNG GIRL?*

SHUT
YOUR MOUTH,
MAGICIAN.

WOW...
THIS REALLY
SUCKS.

*SEE ASPEN UNIVERSE:
DECIMATION #0!

THE SONG
BROUGHT US ALL
TOGETHER FOR SOME
REASON. AND BROUGHT
US TO HER-- BUT,
EVANI. WHAT DO
WE DO NEXT?

SHE BARELY
LOOKS CONSCIOUS.
AND IS BARELY AN
ADULT FROM THE
LOOKS OF IT.

I'M OLD
ENOUGH.

YOU'RE NOT
THE ONLY ONES
THAT KNOW
THE SONG.

I KNOW
EXACTLY WHAT I
NEED TO DO. BRING
THE MAGICIAN
TO ME.

ALRIGHT,
EASY. I SHOULD
START BILLING A
SURCHARGE ON THE
TELEPORTING,
LADIES.

ELSEWHERE IN THE CITY.



THE VOID REALM. BEFORE.



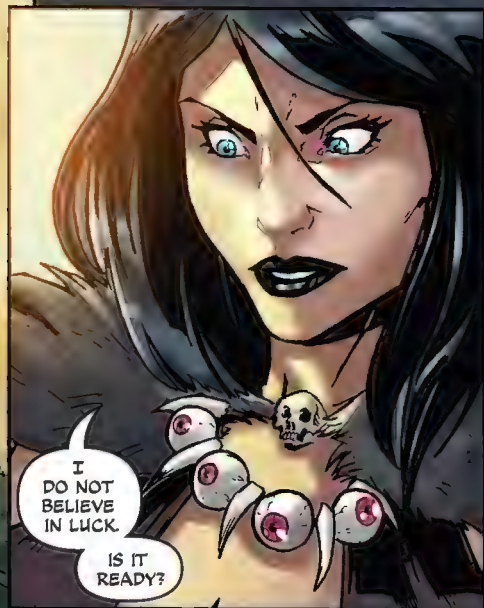
WE HAVE EAGERLY AWAITED YOUR ARRIVAL, ORLANA.



SERKÉ,
IT HAS BEEN AGES.

I SEE
THE DÉCOR
HERE IS STILL...
INVITING.

YOU ARE
ONE OF THE
FEW TO ENTER THE
REALM OF YOUR OWN
VOLITION. CONSIDER
YOURSELF LUCKY TO
BE HELD IN SUCH
REGARD.

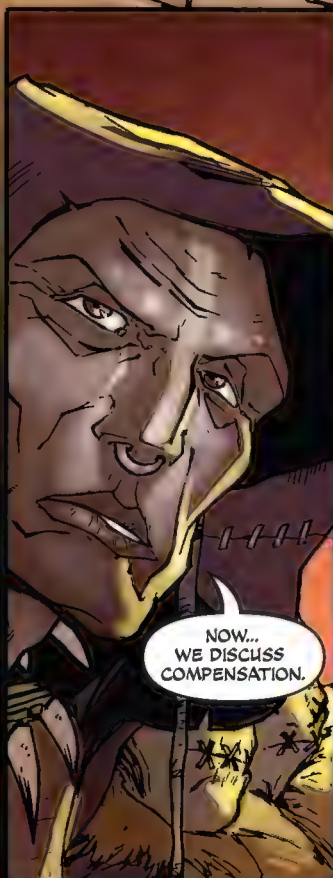
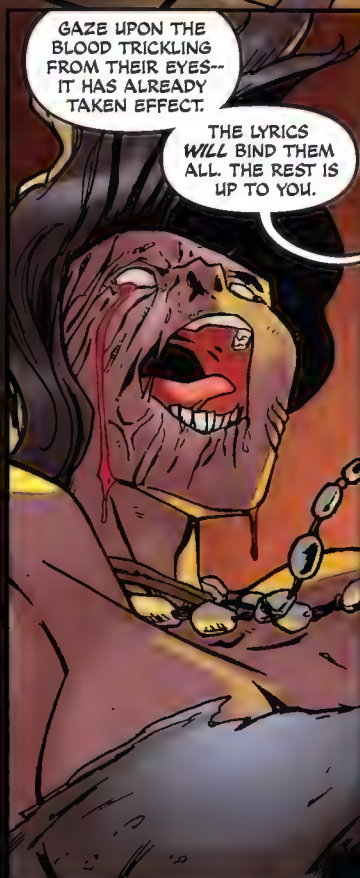


I DO NOT
BELIEVE
IN LUCK.

IS IT
READY?

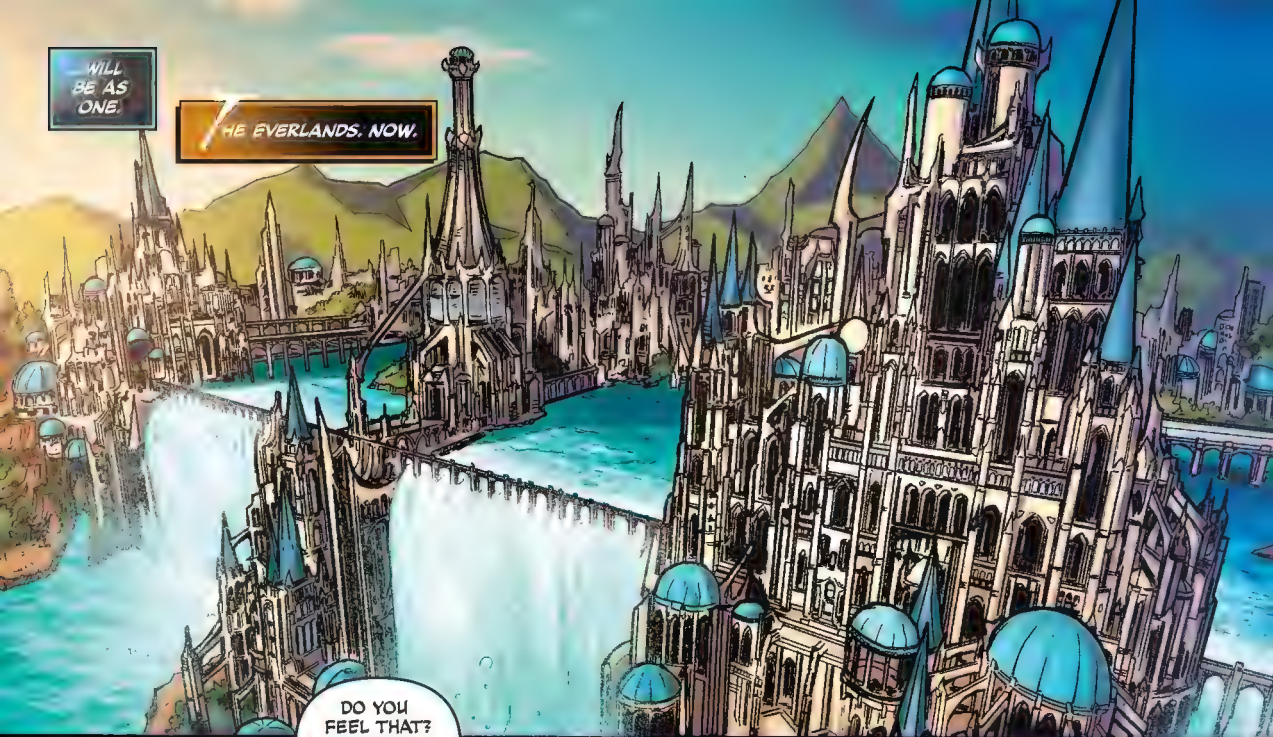


I WOULD NOT
CALL FOR YOUR
ARRIVAL OTHERWISE.
COME. IT IS BETTER
THAN EXPECTED.

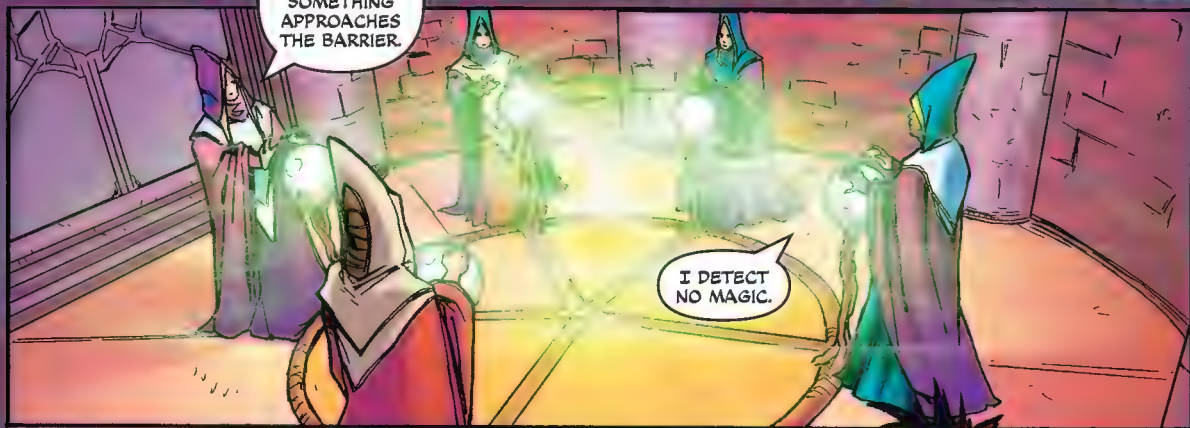


WILL
BE AS
ONE.

THE EVERLANDS. NOW.



DO YOU
FEEL THAT?
SOMETHING
APPROACHES
THE BARRIER.



I DETECT
NO MAGIC.

REGARDLESS,
BE ON THE
READY!
IT
APPROACHES.



YOU MEAN
A DEITY
APPROACHES--



--ONE THAT
WILL USHER IN
A NEW ERA
FOR YOU ALL.





THE PRICE OF
INTRUSION HERE IS
DEATH. IDENTIFY
YOURSELF!



I MEAN
YOU NO HARM,
HERE.

I WISH TO
SIMPLY OFFER
A MESSAGE TO
YOUR RULERS.



ONE DOES NOT
GAIN AUDIENCE WITH
THE KING AND QUEEN
AT WILL-- CERTAINLY NOT
SOMEONE ABOUT TO
BE EXECUTED FOR
TRESPASSING.



YOU MAY
SEE ME TO THE
DUNGEON OR WHEREVER
YOU PLEASE. THEY WILL
COME TO ME SOON
ENOUGH.



ORLANA,
WHY ARE YOU
DOING THIS?

SUDANA--
YOU KNOW BETTER
THAN TO ASK SUCH
QUESTIONS.

IS THIS THE
PART WHERE I
CONFESS MY TRAGIC
PAST, OR BROKEN
PRESENT? WHERE
I REVEAL SOME
LONG-HELD
SCORN I MUST
AVENGE?

I'M SORRY
TO DISAPPOINT
YOU.

I SIMPLY
WANT WHAT
IS MEANT
TO BE MINE--
EVERYTHING.

YOU WERE
DEFEATED ONCE
BEFORE. YOU THINK
THIS TIME WILL BE
ANY DIFFERENT?

THE PAST
IS JUST THAT.
I WAS FOOLISH
THEN. I DEPENDED
ON MERE HUMANS
TO ACCOMPLISH
MY GOALS.

THIS TIME--
I'VE UPGRADED
TO MORE POWERFUL
SERVANTS TO
MY CAUSE.

YOU KNOW,
THEY WILL FAIL YOU
JUST THE SAME. THERE'S
A REASON EACH OF THOSE
WOMEN ARE BROKEN
AS WELL.

ENOUGH.
RECOGNIZE YOUR
PLACE, DRUID. AND BE
THANKFUL I HAVE NOT
RIPPED YOUR TONGUE
FROM YOUR MOUTH
ALTOGETHER.

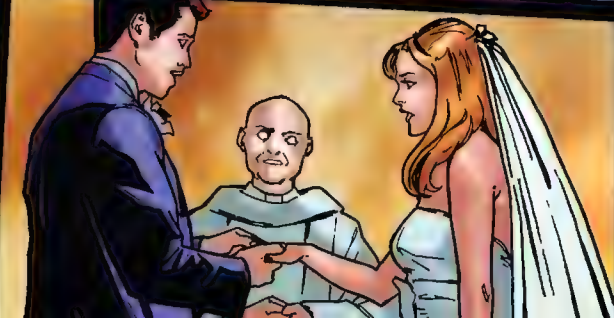
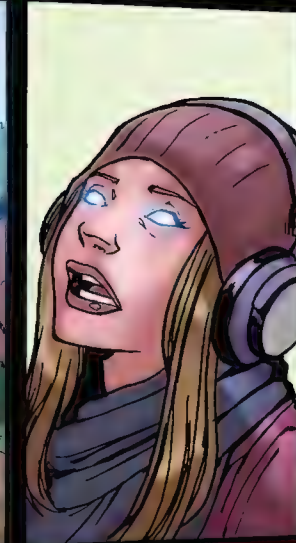
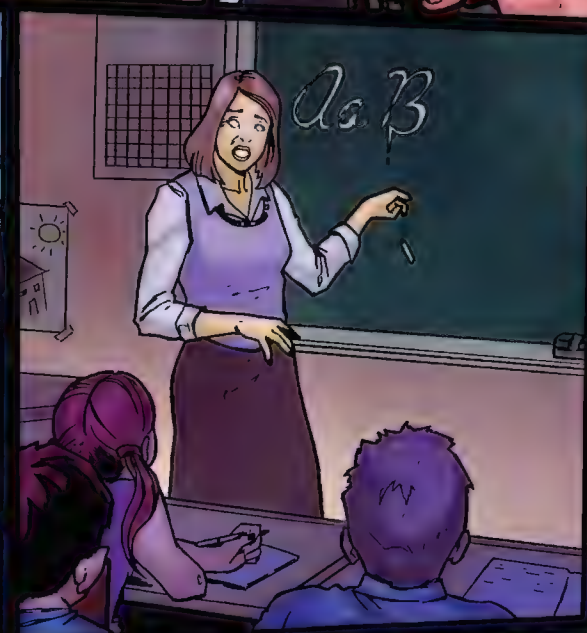
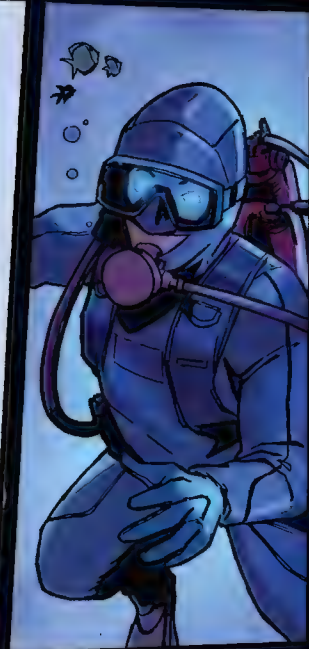
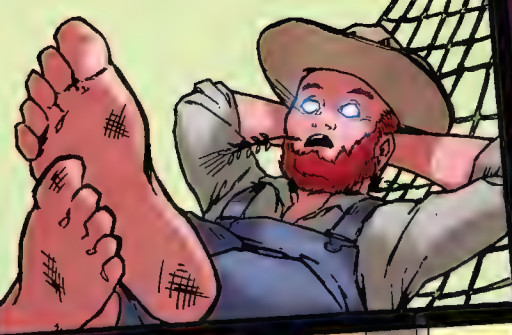
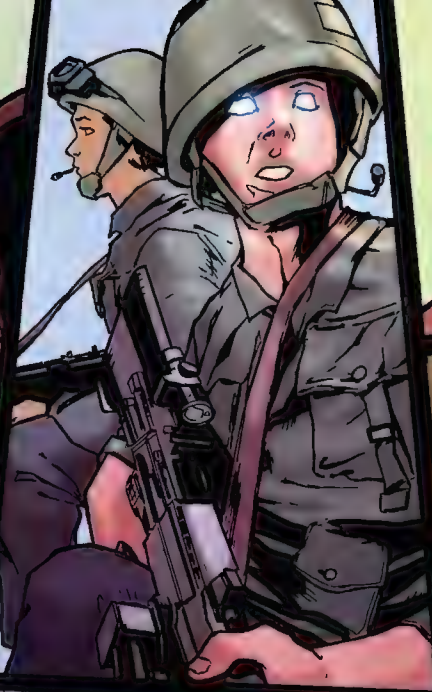
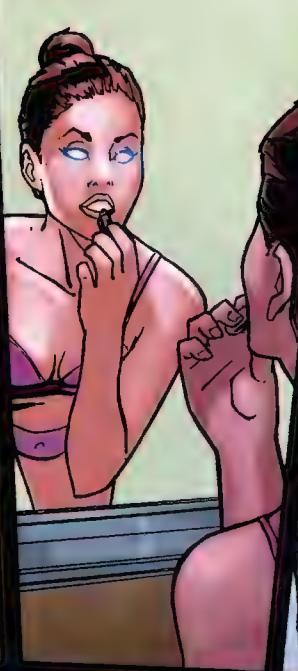
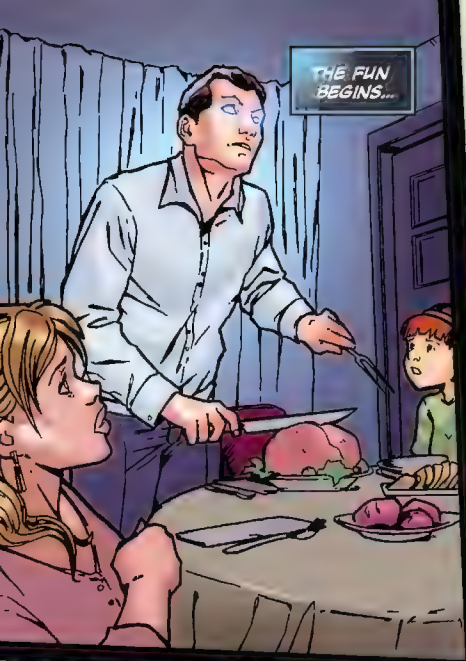
THE PATH WAS
HAZY FOR AWHILE,
BUT THANK YOU FOR
MAKING THE NEXT STEPS
CLEAR TO US, ORLANA. THE
OTHERS-- THEY HAVE NO
IDEA YOU ARE PULLING
THE STRINGS.

EVERYTHING
IS SET IN PLACE.
THE FIGURES ARE
IN PLAY. WE ARE
READY.

WELL,
SPEAK OF THE
DEVILS. I TRUST
YOUR JOURNEY HERE
WAS SHORT WITH
THE VANISHER
AIDING YOU?

WELL
DONE,
EVANI.

NOW
FOR MY
PART...







IT'S A
SIMPLE
ANSWER--
YES OR
NO?

THOM,
THAT'S SOOO
GROSS!



WHAT, YOU'VE
NEVER PLAYED
"WOULD YOU
RATHER" BEFORE?
ACTING ALL
INNOCENT LIKE.



HMM...WOULD
I RATHER EAT A
MAGGOT PIZZA, OR
A MAGGOT BURRITO?
IT'S A VALID SET
OF OPTIONS,
KIORI.

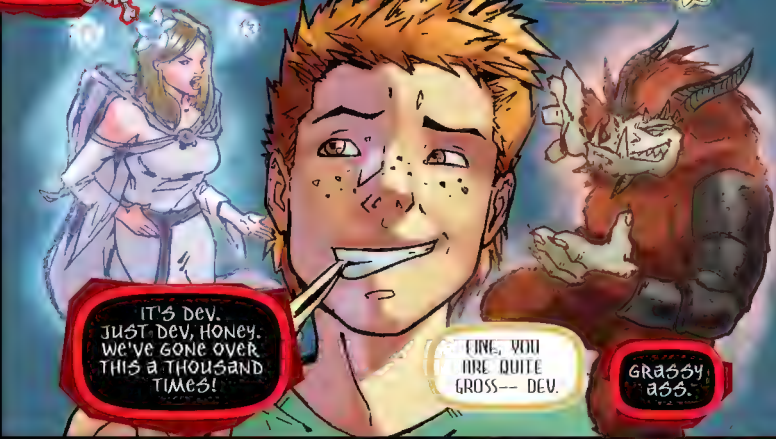
YUCK *THEO*,
YOU TWO ARE
DISGUSTING.



MAGGOT
BURRITO
ALL DAY!

YOU GOTTA
OPEN WIDE
AND SHOVEL
IT IN, I SAY!

KIORI IS
RIGHT, YOU ALL
ARE GROSS,
DEVONSHIRE.



IT'S DEV.
JUST DEV, HONEY.
WE'VE GONE OVER
THIS A THOUSAND
TIMES!

FINE, YOU
ARE QUITE
GROSS-- DEV.

Grassy
ass.



UM, BRO...YOU
REMEMBER THAT
CHICK THAT KEEPS
TRYING TO KILL
US?*

YEAH,
THAT'S
HER.

YOU
MEAN
*EMBER
SILVA*.

WHAT
ABOUT
HER?

UM...
TURN
AROUND.

*SEE SHRUGGED
VOLUME 1 AND 2!



OH,
SHI--

YOUR HONORS, GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I THOUGHT IT BEST TO CONSULT WITH YOU IMMEDIATELY ON THE MATTER BEFORE TAKING FURTHER ACTION.

YOU WERE RIGHT TO BRING THIS TO US AT ONCE.

WE HAVE NOT HAD AN INTRUDER THROUGH THE BARRIER SINCE *OMYX*.* THE KINGDOM MUST KNOW WHO THIS WOMAN IS AND WHAT HER INTENT ENTAILS.

*SEE SOULFIRE VOLUME 1.

BRING HER TO US IMMEDIATELY, LET US SEE WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH.

THAT OUTFIT...?

YOU ARE OF THE BLUE?

I AM NOT JUST OF THE BLUE-- I AM THE BLUE.

I AM *TERZA* OF THE ASCYLIAN BLOODLINE. A GOD TO MY PEOPLE...AND SOON ENOUGH-- YOURS.

SHE'S OBVIOUSLY LOST HER MIND. I SAY WE PUT HER DOWN.

ELABORATE PLEASE.

I HAVE COME TO DELIVER A MESSAGE...

200
YEARS AGO.

SOMEONE
APPROACHES!

I DETECT
MAGIC!

OF
COURSE
YOU DO...

...YOU
WILL ALL
FEEL MY
MAGIC!

NOW
TO TAKE
WHAT'S
MINE.



WHAT--
IS THIS?!



I SEE
THE MESSAGE
HAS ARRIVED.

YOU SEE,
YOU HAVE SHIELDED
YOURSELVES WELL ALL
THESE YEARS HERE IN YOUR
MAGICAL KINGDOM, BUT I KNOW
FIRSTHAND THAT KINGDOMS
ARE NOT MEANT TO
LAST FOREVER.

YOU MAY
HAVE GUARDED YOUR
PRESENT, BUT YOU FORGOT
TO PROTECT YOUR PAST
ADEQUATELY.



AGGGHH--
GET HER!



AT ONCE
YOUR HIGH--



--AGGH!



WHY ARE
YOU DOING
THIS?! WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?

ME? I WANT
MY OWN KINGDOM
BACK. BUT THIS? THIS IS
NOT MY DOING. JAYDEN MUST
HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN
HER PART-- SURELY YOU
HEAR THE LYRICS
AS WELL?



YOU ARE INSANE! I WILL NOT LET YOU TEAR THIS KINGDOM APART!

IT IS MUCH TOO LATE FOR THAT, QUEEN FAYE.



THUD

UNGH!



NO...

I PROMISE YOUR KINGDOM WILL BE IN GOOD HANDS.

I HAVE ALWAYS ADMİRED YOU MAGICAL BEINGS.





EMBER?

IT'S BEEN
AWHILE,
THEO.

SOMETHING
TELLS ME THIS
ISN'T A FRIENDLY
REUNION?

UNFORTUNATELY,
NOT.



THEODORE--
DO NOT ENGAGE
IN CONVERSATION
WITH HER, WE
MUST FLEE!

LEAVE
AT HER!

GUYS,
CHILL!



YO T, I SAY
WE MAKE A RUN
FOR IT WHILE WE
STILL CAN.

UM, WHAT
HE SAID.



YOUR FRIENDS
ARE LOYAL AS I
REMEMBER THEM...
AND, THEY ARE NOT
WRONG. THIS IS NOT
GOING TO END WELL
FOR YOU, THEO. YOU
NEED TO COME
WITH ME.



OKAY--
LET'S
BOOK!



ALREADY ON I- OOF!



LOOK TO YOUR FELINE, HANK. DANGER CAN COME IN ANY SIZE PACKAGE.

A BUNCH OF KIDS, REALLY?

DON'T BRING ME INTO THIS!

THE CAT IS TALKING!



YOU'RE THE DUDE FROM THOSE BILLBOARDS.

YEAH. SORRY, KID. WE KINDA GOT WRAPPED UP IN THIS.

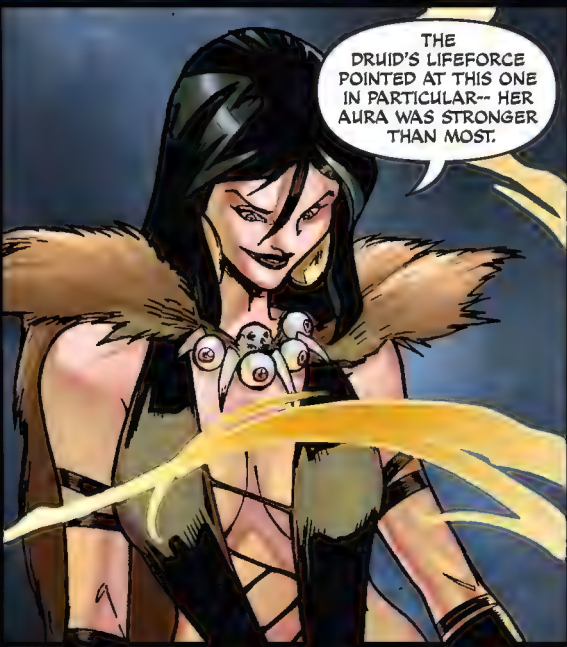


IT'S OVER, THEO. YOU'RE COMING WITH US.





THE HUMAN MIND
IS EXCEPTIONAL, BUT
ONCE IT PASSES INTO
THE AFTERLIFE, THOUGHTS
AND EMOTIONS BECOME
A VORTEX OF CHAOTIC
THOUGHT.



THE
DRUID'S LIFEFORCE
POINTED AT THIS ONE
IN PARTICULAR-- HER
AURA WAS STRONGER
THAN MOST.



I CAN
ALREADY
SENSE IT.



IT IS
WORKING...

HHNNNNNNHH!



INTERESTING.



AS YOU
WISHED...



...YOUR
**EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT**
IS READY.

7 BE CONTINUED...

ASPEN UNIVERSE DECIMATION



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Vol. 1

COVER A

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ZEN

#2
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DECIMATION: PART 2

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pencils
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digi-inks
Mark Roslan

color artists
Federico Blee

lettering
Zen

PREVIOUSLY:

Orlana, the Death Princess, bound a collective of powerful women through dark magical lyrics in order to set in motion a series of catastrophic events that would ultimately fuel her return to power. Utilizing the magician, Hank Medley, in order to span both the past and the future, she was able to conquer the magical realm of The Everlands through the warrior Terza and her young counterpart, Jayden. She also used the talents of Ember Silva and Terra to capture the young boy Theo, who is capable of his own conscious thought. Meanwhile, in her temple lair, Orlana, along with the help of the sorcerer Evani, managed to resurrect the dead—specifically Executive Assistant Lily...

ORLANA AKA: THE DEATH PRINCESS



Her conquest to rule the Earth using her ability to control minds failed once prior, yet not before the combined might of magic's greatest forces nearly reached their breaking point. The wizard Kon personally saw to her captivity within a slave camp, yet her devastating powers can never truly be diminished.

TERRA



The balance of good and evil requires a faithful demigod of death capable of feeding the seeds of chaos and ushering souls into the afterlife—or for her own keeping. Terra is the catalyst for Dellec's quest of vengeance as she ripped the heart from his wife's body as he bore witness, forging a path of blood and souls that continues today.

JAYDEN



After serving as a wedge between Malikai and Sonia's relationship, and eventually outcast from the group due to her malicious activities, Jayden was unknowingly trapped by the authorities and ultimately captured by Rainier's bounty hunter, Blackjack. Once under his control, she became a conduit for all of his torturous experiments.

TERZA



A fierce Ascylian warrior that served under the sinister Biranha, Terza's naiveté has been both her blessing and curse, as her willingness to plunge into battle nearly saved her city as it crumbled all around her, yet caused her to be captured and kept in stasis as the city's spiritual savior.

EVANI



Little is known about the powerful necromancer, Evani, beyond her inherent ability to resuscitate the dead. However, her powers have not been used for virtue, as she betrayed Miya and utilized her dead father Noris' soul to fuel a monstrous dragon creature as part of the witch Nisaba's plan to destroy the amazon warrior once and for all.

EMBER SILVA



A "Half-breed" of both Elysian and Nefarian descent, Ember Silva discovered the dark and ugly side of politics firsthand as she was forced to create a false fear of humans in order to get elected as the leader of Perspecta. Her lies soon caught up to her, as she was forced out of office and exiled until her eventual rise and return as the ruler of Nefario. That is, until a young boy named Theo has thrown her rule into a tailspin.

No Soul in the Aspen Universe is Safe!

*Fathom & Soulfire created by Michael Turner | Shrugged created by Michael Turner & Frank Mastromauro
Dellec created by Frank Mastromauro & Vince Hernandez | Charismagic created by Vince Hernandez*

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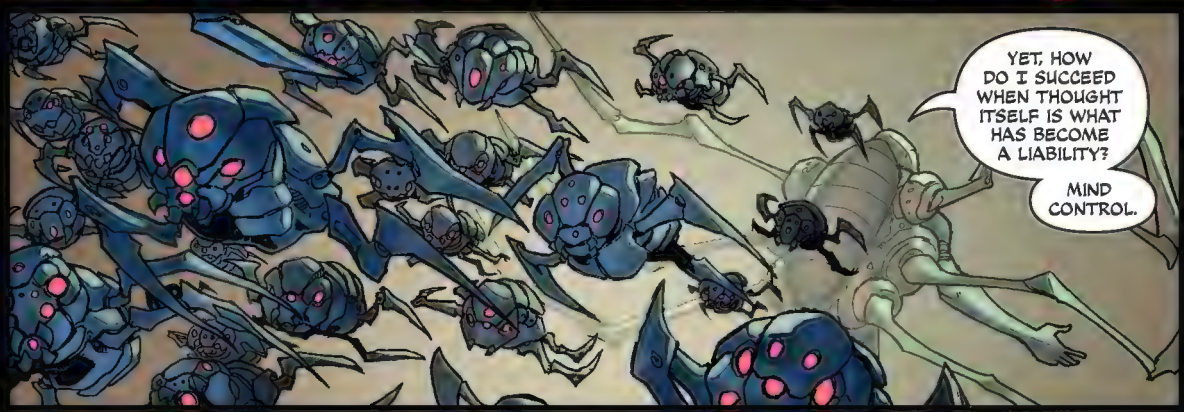
JOURNAL ENTRY: 61-AA.

61-AA CONFIRMED.

THE CLIENT, *RAINIER*, HAS SUMMONED ME ONCE AGAIN...

RECENT SERVICES RENDERED TO THE CLIENT HAVE PROVEN... UNSUCCESSFUL, AT BEST.

THE SOLUTION TO THESE FAILURES REQUIRES A NEW LINE OF THINKING.



YET, HOW DO I SUCCEED WHEN THOUGHT ITSELF IS WHAT HAS BECOME A LIABILITY?

MIND CONTROL.



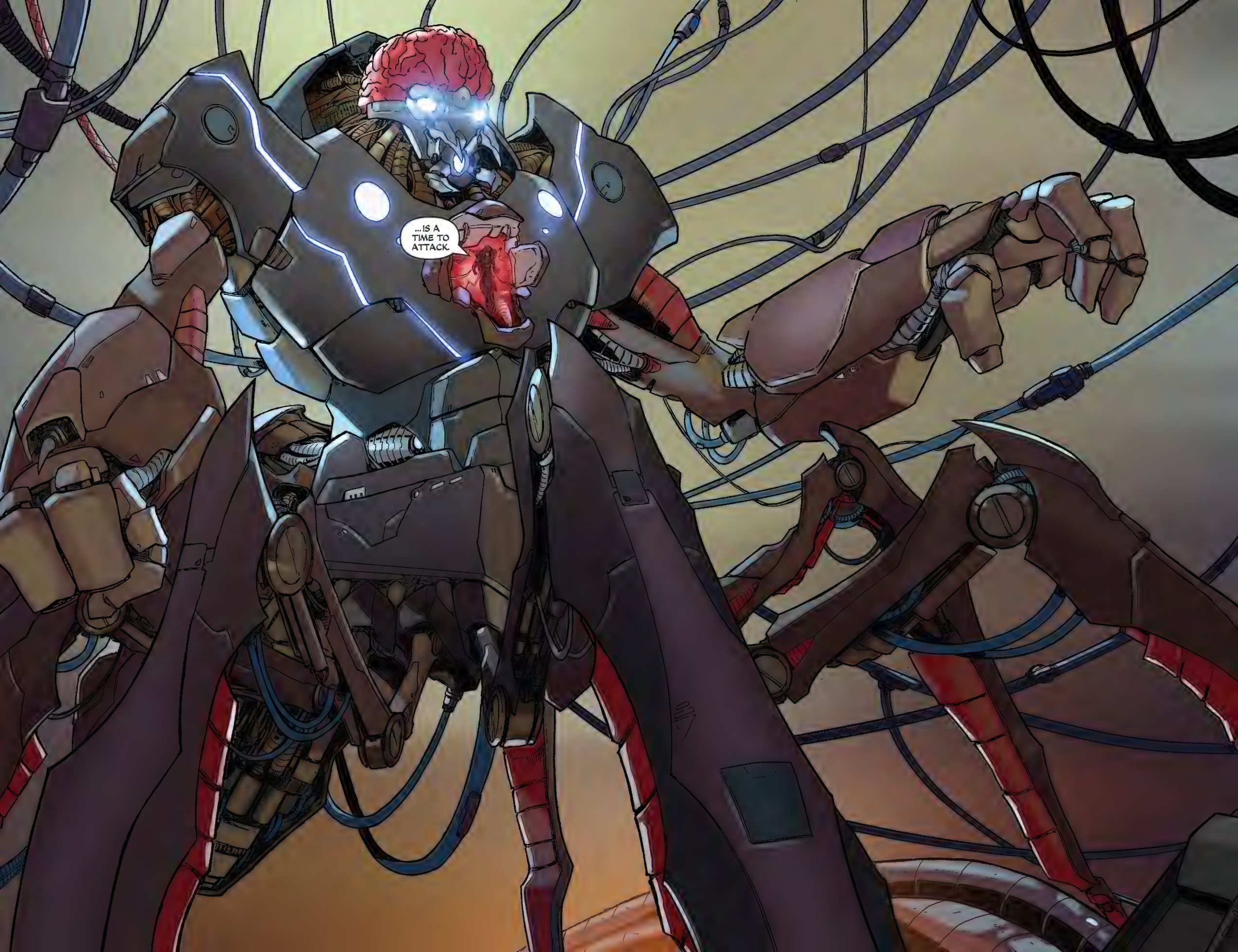
I HAVE ALWAYS LIVENED AT THE POSSIBILITIES OF SUCH TELEPATHIC ADVANTAGES IN THE ART OF WAR. IT IS, AFTER ALL, MY BUSINESS TO CONTINUALLY POSITION MYSELF AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION.

YET, I AM WISE ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND ITS MANY INHERENT DANGERS AND VULNERABILITIES. AS A RESULT, MY PREPARATIONS FOR SUCH A CATACLYSM BEGAN LONG AGO.



I AM NO FOOL...MY *MIND* IS MY MOST VALUED POSSESSION. AND I WILL PROTECT IT ACCORDINGLY FROM THOSE THAT SEEK TO ENTER IT.

YET, THIS IS NO TIME FOR DEFENSE. THIS...



...IS A
TIME TO
ATTACK.

WHY THE MASTER?

IT IS NOT THE "WHY" BUT THE "WHAT" THAT MATTERS.



THE MASTER CAN SUMMON THE BOY, STILL. REALLY, THE BOY IS...BEYOND WHAT WE SEEK TO ENTANGLE. HE WOULD ONLY CAUSE US...CHAOS.

THE ONE KNOWN AS REN IS QUITE KEEN.



HE HAS SENSED THIS CONCLUSION FOR SOME TIME. YET, HE IS ONLY A "MASTER" OF DECIDING THE FATE OF THE LIVING...

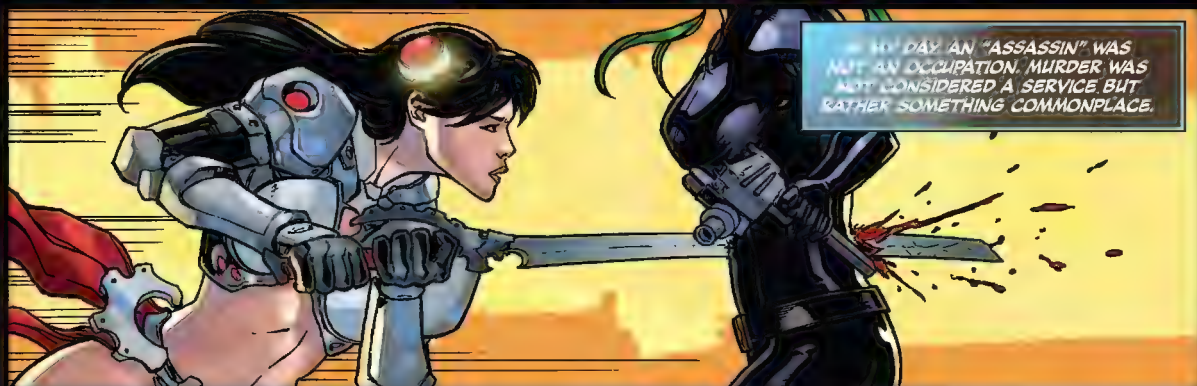


SHE HAS NO SWAY OVER THE DEAD.





I FIND THE WHOLE
THING QUITE PECULIAR.

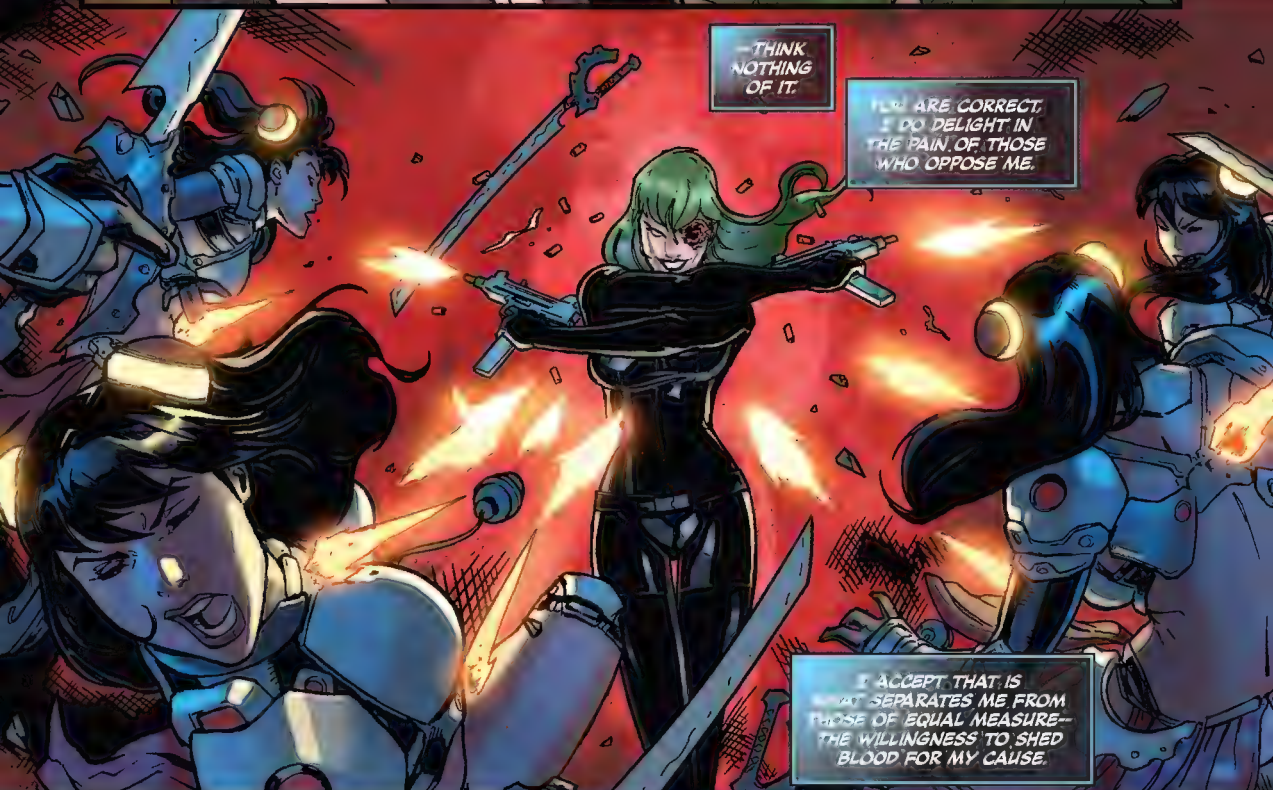


BY DAY AN "ASSASSIN" WAS
NOT AN OCCUPATION. MURDER WAS
NOT CONSIDERED A SERVICE BUT
RATHER SOMETHING COMMONPLACE.



SOME, IN FACT,
QUITE ENJOYED IT.







I ADMIRE
THAT TRAIT IN
YOU. YOUR
WILLINGNESS TO
DO WHATEVER IS
NECESSARY...



...CONTINUALLY
THINKING BEYOND
YOUR FOE...



...WE WILL NOT FAIL
BECAUSE OF IT...



THIS WORLD
WILL BE OURS



FOR
NOW.





SORRY ABOUT THIS, KIDS. *SPARKLES*-- MY FELINE FRIEND HERE-- AND MYSELF, WE SORTA GOT WRAPPED UP IN ALL OF THIS.



YOU ARE TO COME WITH US, *THEO*. BE GRATEFUL WE DID NOT GET OUTHRIGHT EXECUTION ORDERS.



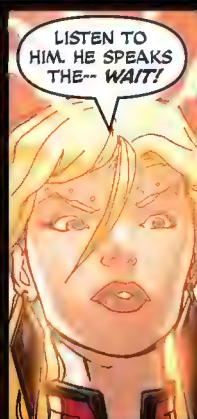
WHY CAN'T YOU JUST *LEAVE US ALL ALONE?* AND, *WHAT'S* WITH THE SPOOKY GHOST SKULLS?

SILENCE, GIRL, OR YOU WILL BECOME ONE.

THIS ONE SEEMS EXTRA SALTY.



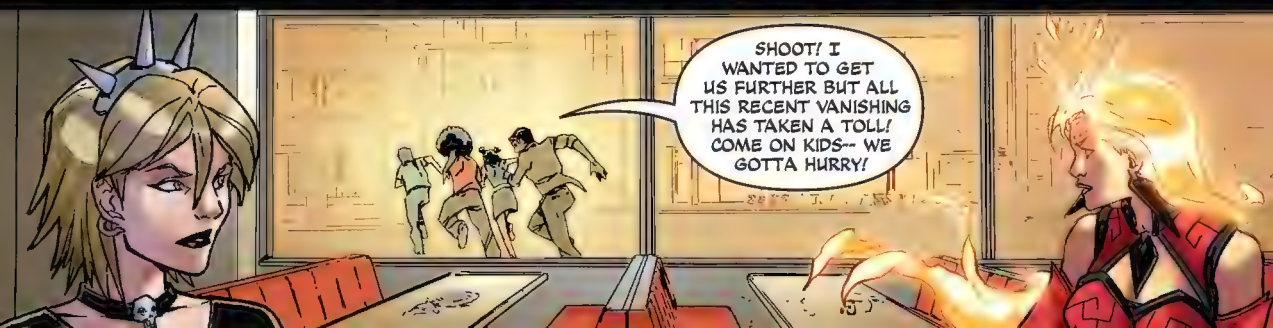
THE LADIES ARE RIGHT, *THEO*. THIS WILL ALL GO A LOT EASIER IF YOU JUST COME WITH ME.



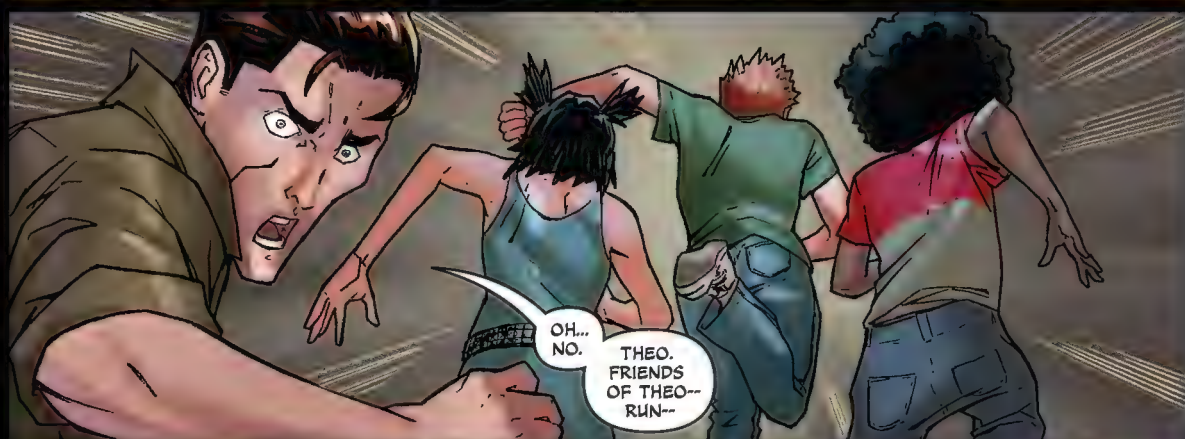
LISTEN TO HIM. HE SPEAKS THE-- *WAIT!*



SPARKLES, THE LEG-- NOW!



SHOOT! I WANTED TO GET US FURTHER BUT ALL THIS RECENT VANISHING HAS TAKEN A TOLL! COME ON KIDS-- WE GOTTA HURRY!





I'VE NEVER ACTUALLY OWNED A HOME BEFORE, OR EVEN RENTED. I DON'T EVEN THINK I HAVE A CREDIT SCORE. I DID PLAN ON GETTING TO ALL OF THAT, THOUGH.

BUT, THIS... I COULD GET USED TO.

I AM A DEITY BY RIGHT. A THRONE ROOM... IS BEFITTING A PROPER LEADER SUCH AS MYSELF.

HUMBLE... I LIKE THAT ABOUT YOU.

A BIT... EXCESSIVE, DO YOU NOT THINK?

HEY, WHAT'S THE POINT OF RULING A MAGICAL KINGDOM IF YOU CAN'T HAVE SOME FUN?

I'VE ALSO NEVER HAD PETS BEFORE. YAY!

YOUR HIGHNESSES. THE PREPARATIONS ARE DONE FOR THE BARRIER TO BE REMOVED.

--THAT WILL BE ALL, SERVANT. JUST GET IT DONE.

YES, UM, YES... OF COURSE.

YET, IF I MAY... THE... UM... THE BARRIER HAS STOOD AS A DEFENSE FROM THE HUMAN WORLD FOR CENTURIES. TO SIMPLY REMOVE IT ON A WHIM, IT WOULD BE--



A PROPER LEADER ALSO LISTENS TO THE PLEAS OF THE CITIZENRY.

BUT *SMARTER* FOLKS LISTEN HARDER TO THE LYRICS POUNDING INSIDE THEIR MINDS INCESSANTLY.

YOU WANNA RISK UPSETTING WHOEVER IS BEHIND THEM?

IT'S NOT ABOUT RISK. I AM A RULER IN MY OWN RIGHT. TO FOLLOW BLINDLY IS NOT IN MY NATURE. THESE FORSAKEN LYRICS. LIKE A DRUG WE ARE UNABLE TO QUIT.



I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I'M NOT GOING BACK TO CHAINS IN SOME CELL IN RAINIER TOWER. THAT BASTARD.



I SUPPOSE YOU SPEAK THE TRUTH, EVEN FOR A TEENAGER.

I'M MUCH MORE MATURE THAN MY AGE...



ISN'T THAT RIGHT YOU CUTIE-PATOOTIE!

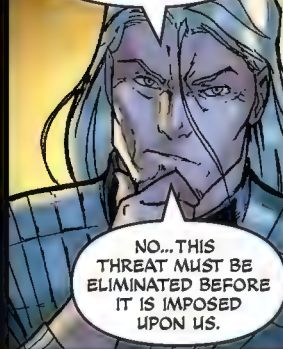


THE TASK AT HAND
REQUIRED SOMETHING...
BIGGER. I TAKE IT SHE
HAS AN ARMY BEHIND
HER. THE REST
WELL...

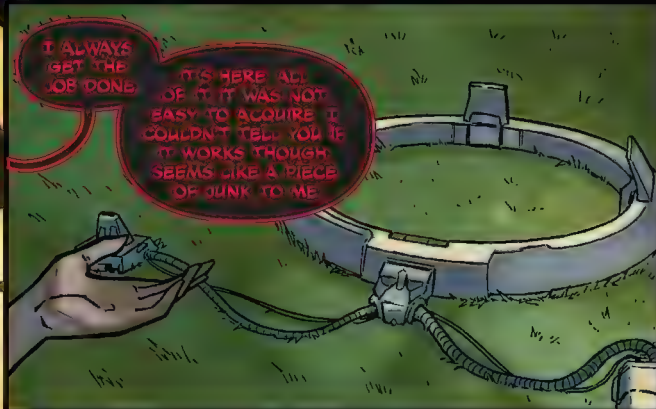
TRUST
THAT NO SPACE
IS MISUSED. THE
TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED
TO BLOCK NEURAL
TRANSMISSIONS
IS STILL QUITE
CUMBERSOME.

ORLANA IS PURE CHAOS
BEYOND OUR MEANS.
WITHOUT ORDER, EVERYTHING
WE HAVE WORKED TOWARDS
WOULD BE FOR NAUGHT.
HOW CAN WE CONTROL A
WORLD THAT IS HEADED
FOR EXTINCTION?

YOU ARE
CERTAIN YOU
GATHERED ALL OF
THE NECESSARY
COMPONENTS? I CAN
ONLY SET IT ONCE
TO TAKE US
THERE.



NO...THIS
THREAT MUST BE
ELIMINATED BEFORE
IT IS IMPOSED
UPON US.

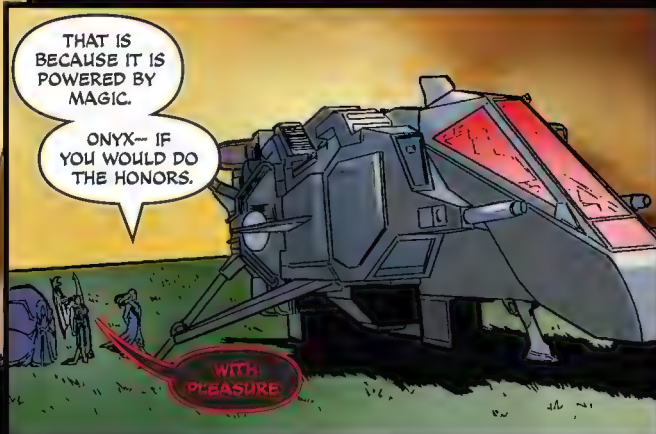


I ALWAYS
GET THE
JOB DONE.

IT'S HERE ALL
OF IT. IT WAS NOT
EASY TO ACQUIRE. I
COULDN'T TELL YOU IF
IT WORKS THOUGH.
SEEMS LIKE A PIECE
OF JUNK TO ME.

YOU WERE
ALWAYS ONE
FOR THE
SPECTACLE,
MR. ABEL.

IT IS
MASSIVE.



THAT IS
BECAUSE IT IS
POWERED BY
MAGIC.

ONYX-- IF
YOU WOULD DO
THE HONORS.

WITH
PLEASURE



THE DEVICE
WAS ACTIVATED BY
GRACE LAST TIME IT
WORKED. HOWEVER, USING
HER... TALENTS... IS
OBVIOUSLY NOT A
POSSIBILITY.



PSSSH



SO WE
WILL USE THE
NEXT BEST
THING.



I HAVE
HEARD OF THIS
ONE, AND HIS ABILITY
TO SIPHON MAGIC. HE
SHOULD DO JUST
FINE. BRING HIM
FORWARD.

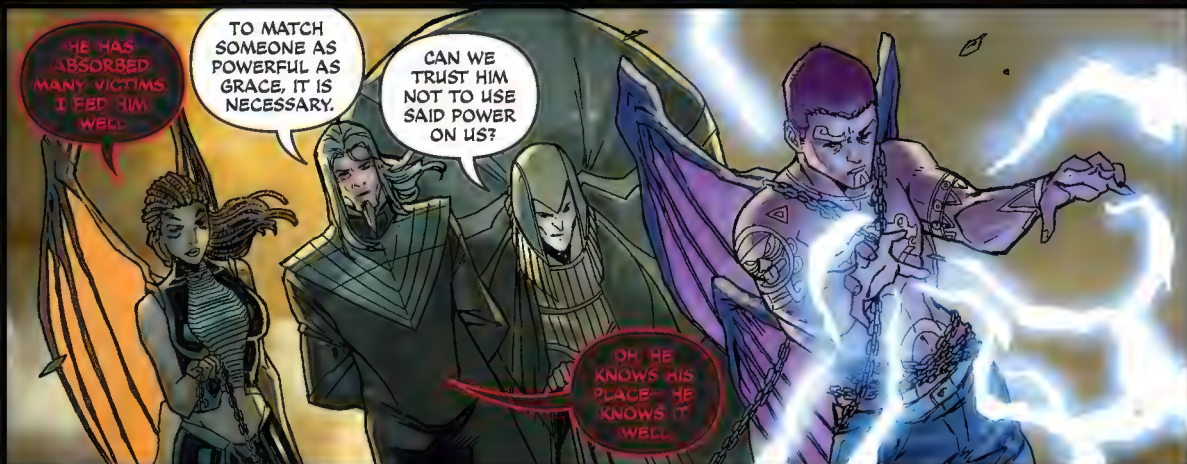


COME ON-
MOVE IT!





IT IS
GRACE OF
EMPYREA!



HE HAS
ABSORBED
MANY VICTIMS
I FEAR HIM
WELL.

TO MATCH
SOMEONE AS
POWERFUL AS
GRACE, IT IS
NECESSARY.

CAN WE
TRUST HIM
NOT TO USE
SAID POWER
ON US?

OH HE
KNOWS HIS
PLACE - HE
KNOWS IT
WELL.



IT
APPEARS
TO BE
WORKING



REMEMBER,
WE MUST BE KEEN
NOT TO DISRUPT
TOO MUCH OR WE
RISK UNDOING THE
BALANCE OF TIME
ALTOGETHER.

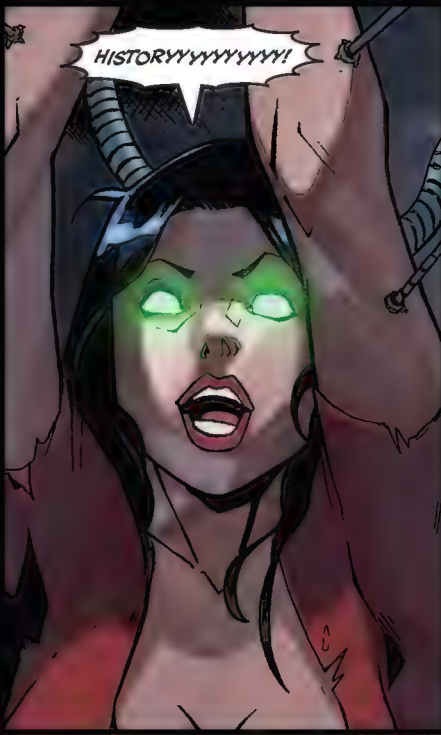
THE PAST...
I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN
CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT
CAME BEFORE US.

THE PAST
IS NO
DIFFERENT
THAN THE
PRESENT.

FILLED
WITH PAIN AND
DESPAIR.

COME LET
US MAKE
HISTORY.









SHE
HAS PROVEN
USEFUL...
FOR A DEAD
PERSON.



YOU WILL
SOON JOIN
THEM.

WHAT
DID YOU--



BARRROOOOOOOO!

THAT IS
OUTSIDE!

THE HUMAN
DEFENSES
HAVE BEEN
COMPROMISED.



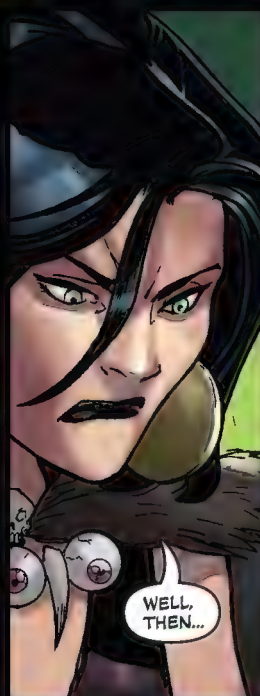
THIS
IS YOU,
ISN'T IT?

WRONG
AGAIN.

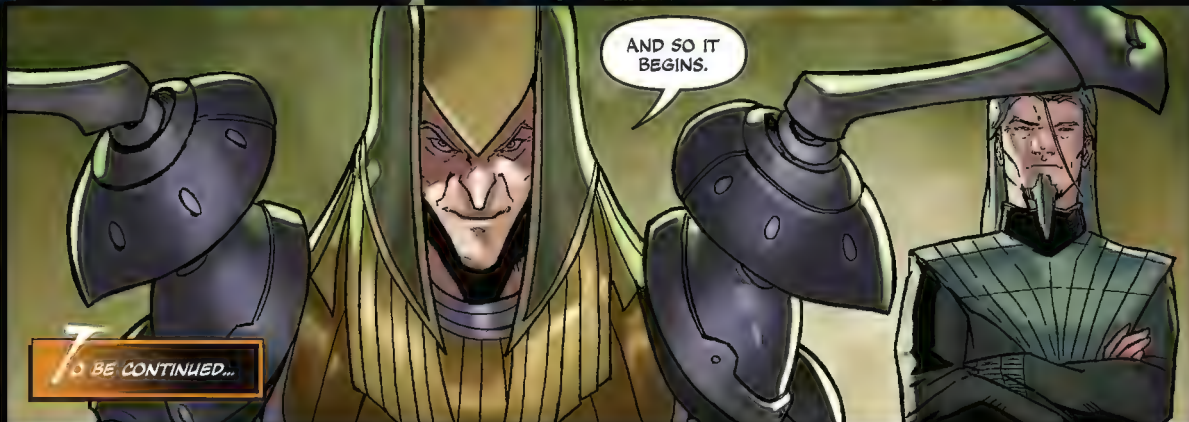
COME.



THIS, I
DID NOT
EXPECT.



WELL,
THEN...



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DECIMATION: PART 3

writer
Vince Hernandez

pencils
Marco Renna

digi-inks
Mark Roslan

color artists
Federico Blee

lettering
Zen

PREVIOUSLY:

In the future, Executive Assistant Lily rose from the dead with the help of Evani's dark magic, and soon overthrew the powerful master Ren, who was uncertain how to defeat an undead foe. Meanwhile, Rainier recruited the technological prowess of Mr. Abel in order to journey into the past to confront the Death Princess, Orlana. In the Everlands, Jayden and Terza found themselves the new royal leadership of the kingdom, although Terza questioned the validity of their reign. And, in Santa Monica, Hank, Theo and friends nearly died at the paws of a mind-controlled Sparkies, but were rescued in the nick of time by their captors, Ember and Terra...

ORLANA AKA: THE DEATH PRINCESS



Her conquest to rule the Earth using her ability to control minds failed once prior, yet not before the combined might of magic's greatest forces nearly reached their breaking point. The wizard Kon personally saw to her captivity within a slave camp, yet her devastating powers can never truly be diminished.

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EVANI



Little is known about the powerful necromancer, Evani, beyond her inherent ability to resuscitate the dead. However, her powers have not been used for virtue, as she betrayed Miya and utilized her dead father Noris' soul to fuel a monstrous dragon creature as part of the witch Nisaba's plan to destroy the amazon warrior once and for all.

EMBER SILVA



A "Half-breed" of both Elysian and Nefarian descent, Ember Silva discovered the dark and ugly side of politics firsthand as she was forced to create a false fear of humans in order to get elected as the leader of Perspecta. Her lies soon caught up to her, as she was forced out of office and exiled until her eventual rise and return as the ruler of Nefario. That is, until a young boy named Theo has thrown her rule into a tailspin.

No Soul in the Aspen Universe is Safe!

*Fathom & Soulfire created by Michael Turner | Shrugged created by Michael Turner & Frank Mastromauro
Dellec created by Frank Mastromauro & Vince Hernandez | Charismagic created by Vince Hernandez*

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THIS IS ONE TOO
FAR GONE...



HIS MIND
CANNOT BE SWAYED.
NOR DO I WISH TO
AMALGAM MY MAGIC
WITH SUCH HATRED
FOR OUR KIND.

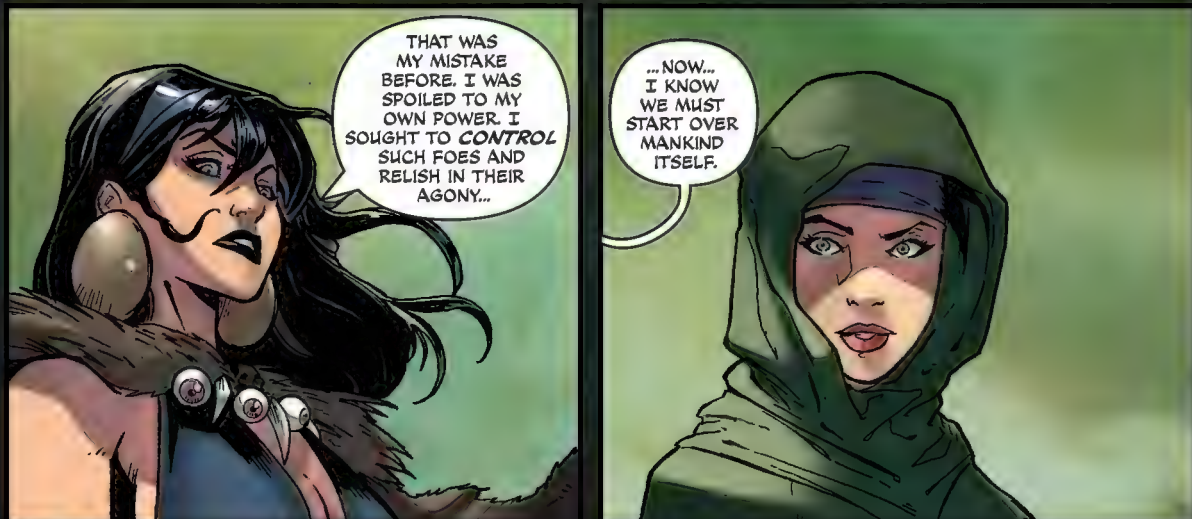
ARE YOU
CERTAIN? IF
WE CANNOT
CONTROL
HIM--

--THEN
WE KILL
HIM.



THAT WAS
MY MISTAKE
BEFORE. I WAS
SPOILED TO MY
OWN POWER. I
SOUGHT TO **CONTROL**
SUCH FOES AND
RELISH IN THEIR
AGONY...

...NOW...
I KNOW
WE MUST
START OVER
MANKIND
ITSELF.





THE NEURAL
FIREWALL
APPEARS TO BE
FUNCTIONING...
FOR NOW.



YET, ONYX IS
VULNERABLE.

SHE
WILL BE
FINE.

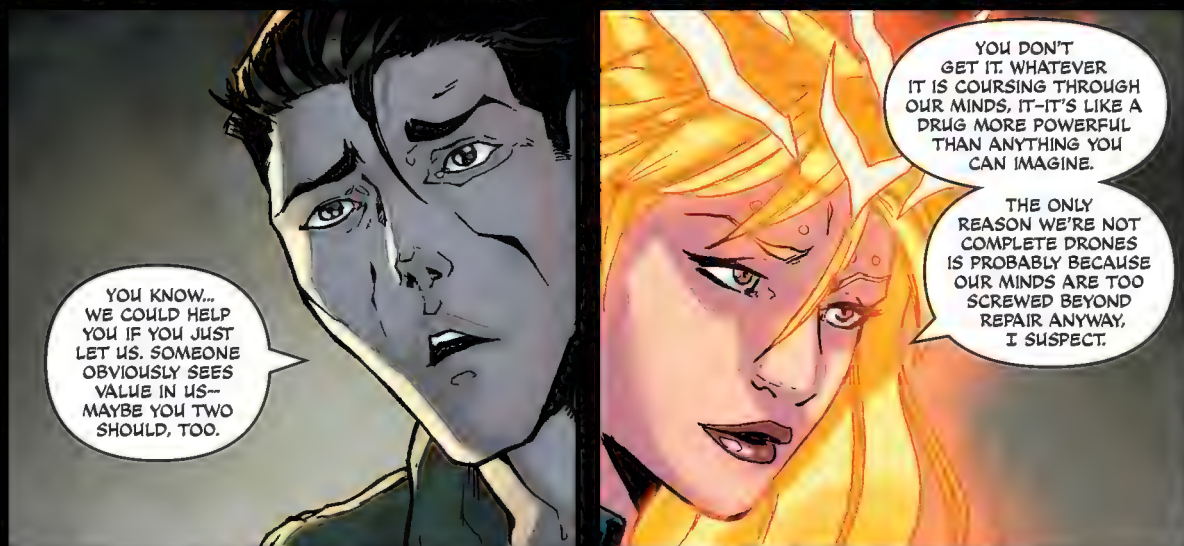
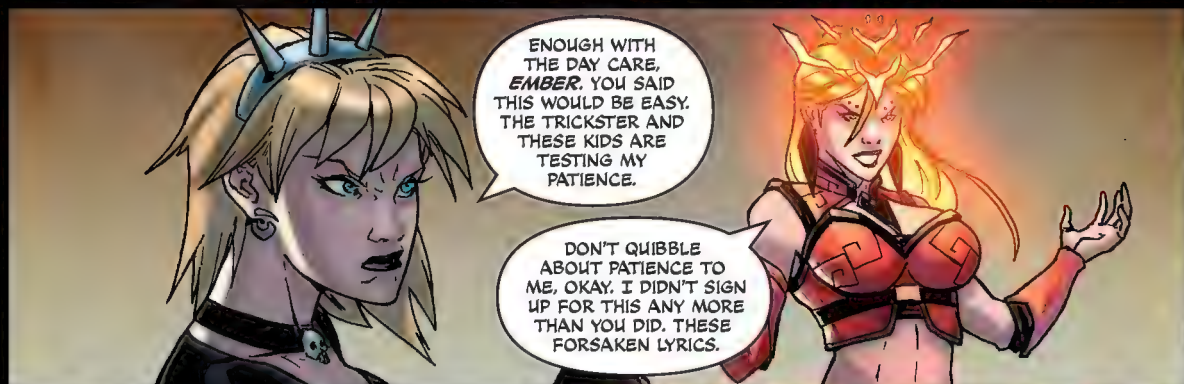
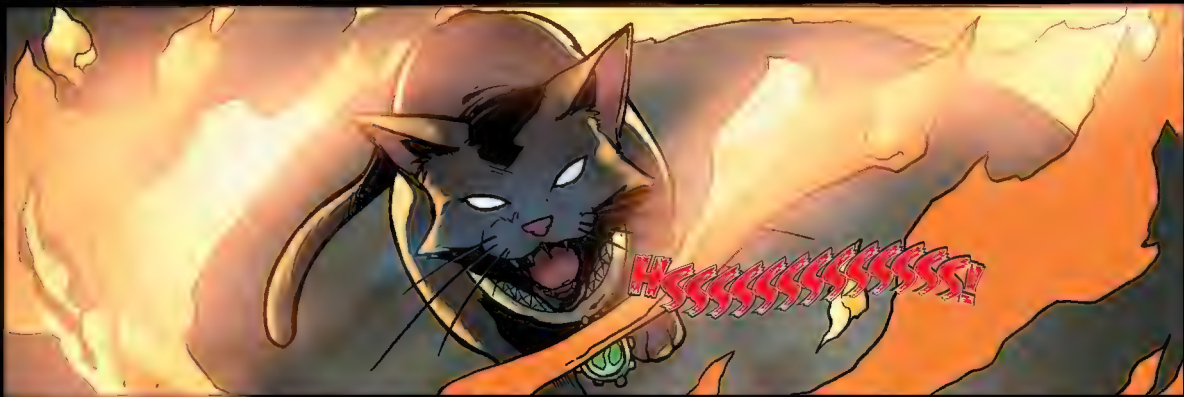
I REMAIN EVER
TRUSTWORTHY
OF YOUR VISION,
RAINIER.

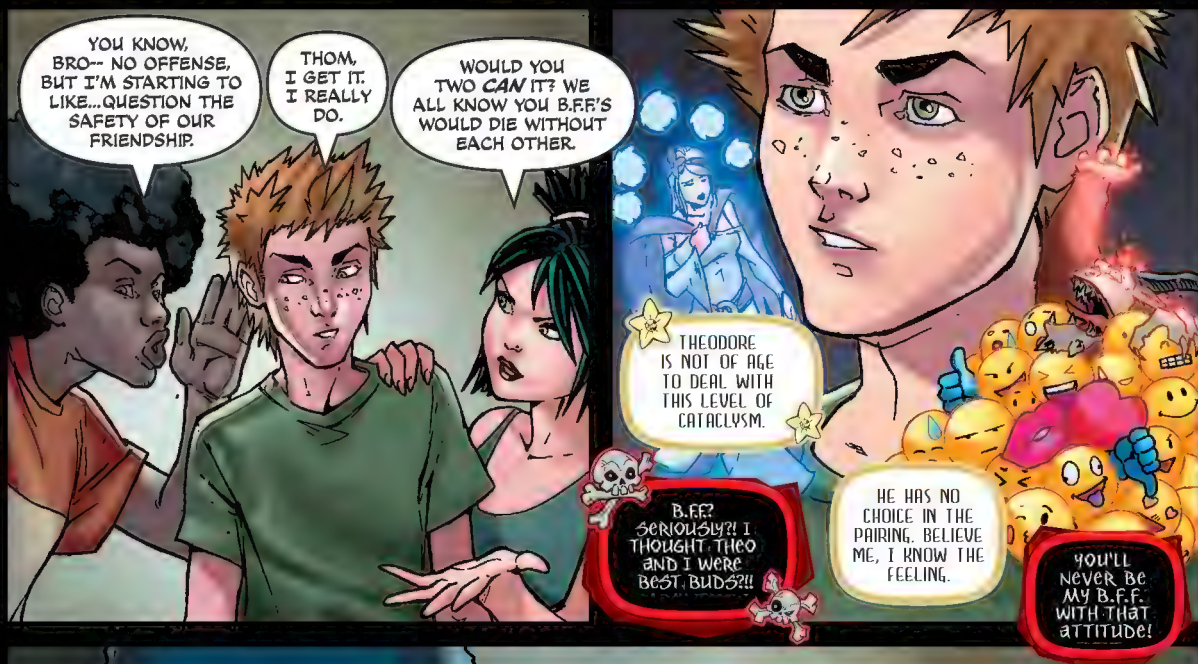
ORLANA HAS
ALREADY ATTEMPTED
TO CONTROL ME,
I FELT IT.

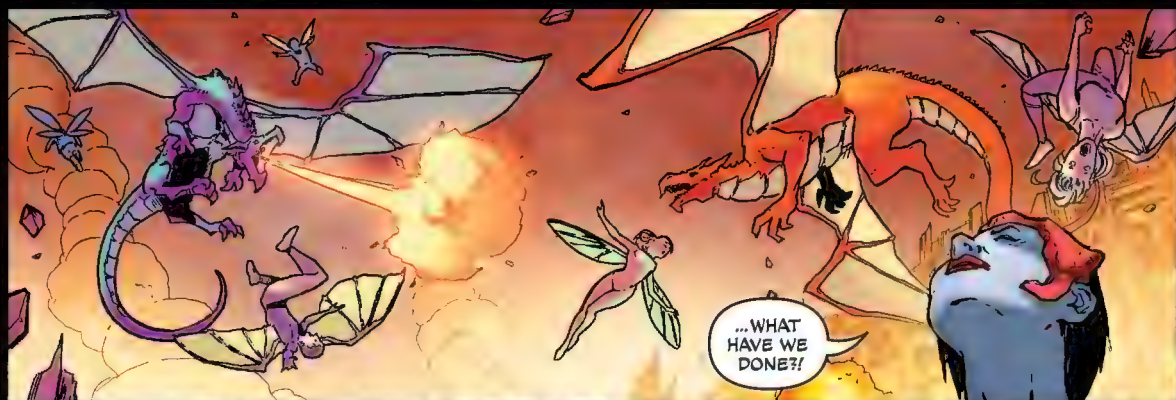
YOU ARE
PROTECTED
BY YOUR
HARDWARE,
SHE NOW
KNOWS THIS.

NO, HER
ONLY PLAY
HERE IS ONYX.
UNFORTUNATELY
THIS FACT
REMAINS TRUE
FOR US, AS
WELL.







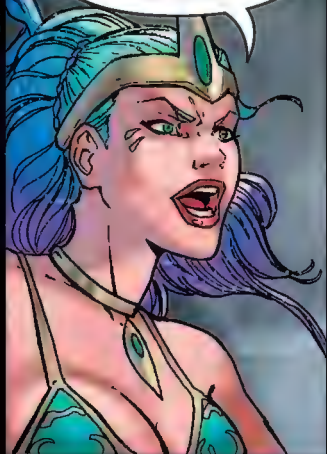




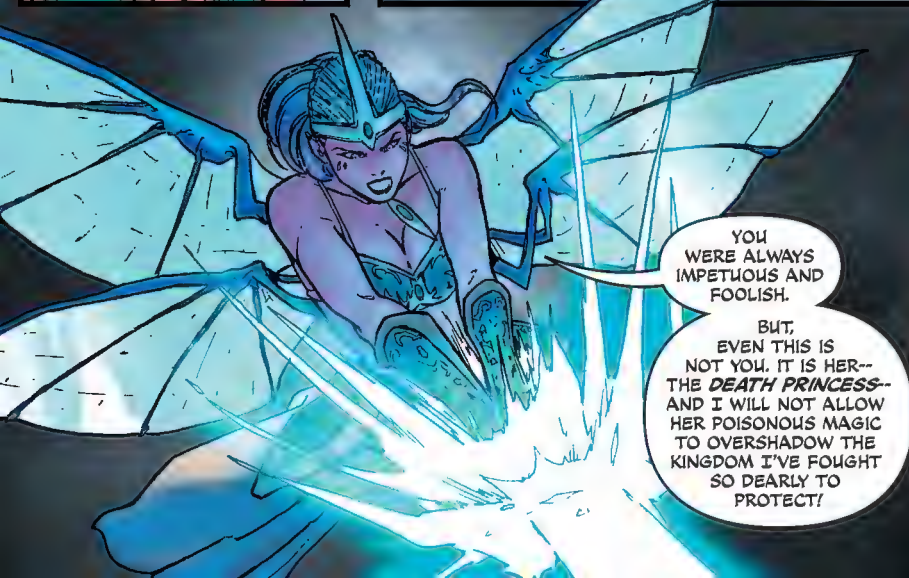
JAYDEN--
I CANNOT
ALLOW THIS TO
CONTINUE.

AH, GRACE,
I MISSED YOUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS. WE
ARE PROPER LEADERS BY
RIGHT. THE FORMER
LANDLORDS UP AND
VANISHED.

THIS IS NOT A GAME.
YOU ARE UPSETTING THE
BALANCE OF TIME AND
MAGIC ITSELF. THERE ARE
REPERCUSSIONS BEYOND
YOUR COMPREHENSION
AT RISK.



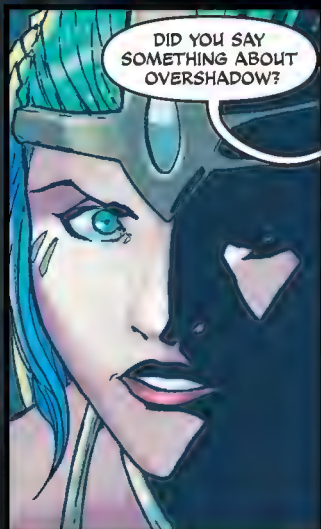
UNNH. YOU'RE
SUCH A HALL
MONITOR. YOU'RE
JUST JEALOUS
THE LYRICS DIDN'T
CHOOSE YOU!

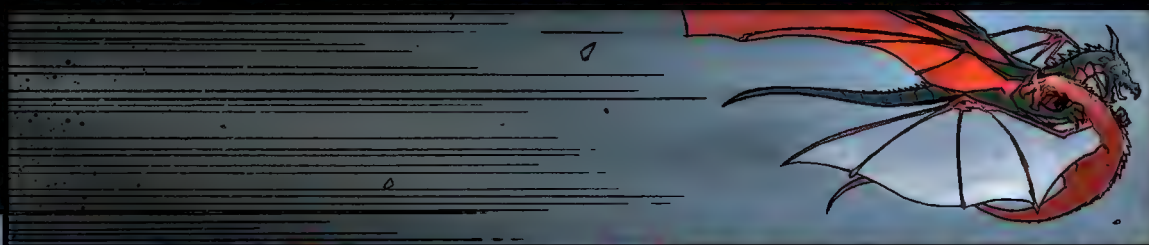
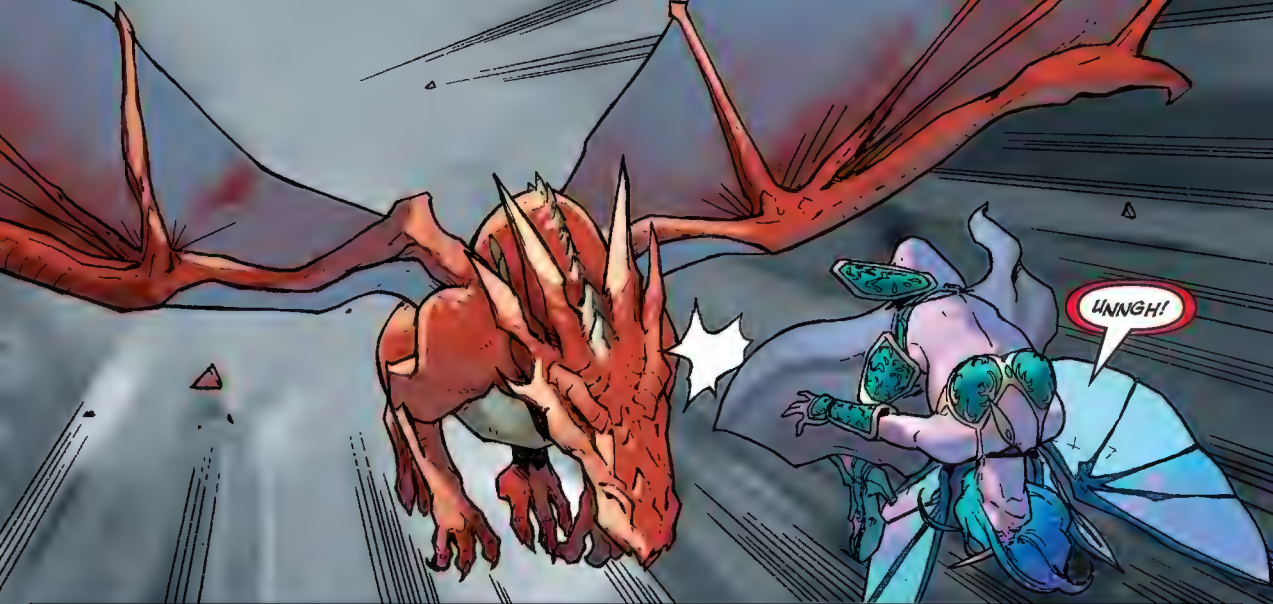


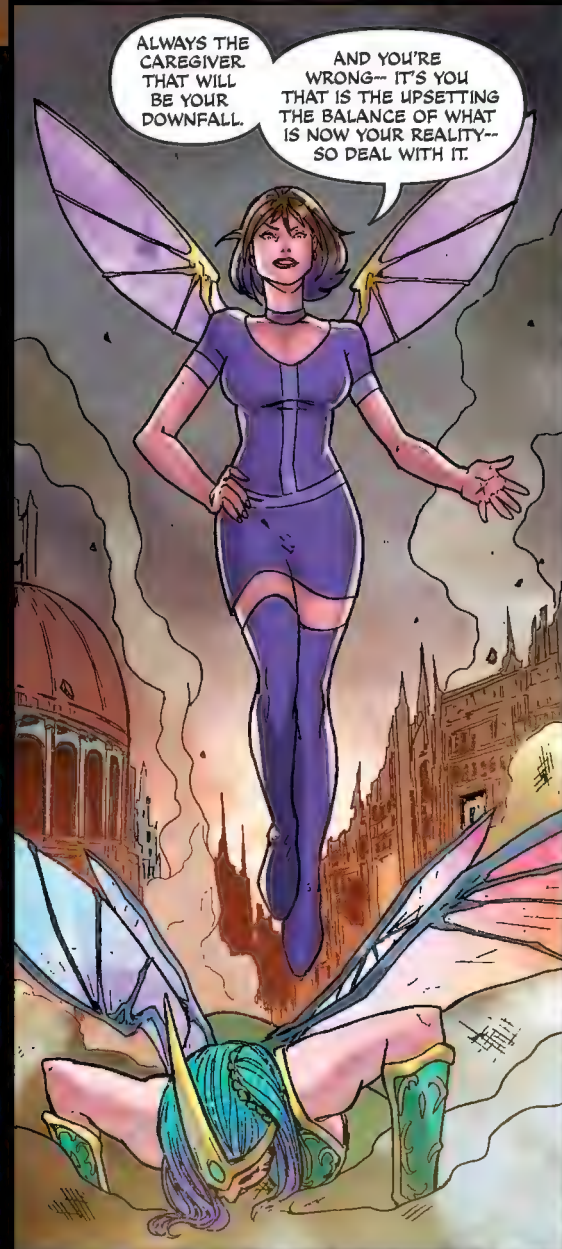
YOU
WERE ALWAYS
IMPETUOUS AND
FOOLISH.

BUT,
EVEN THIS IS
NOT YOU. IT IS HER--
THE **DEATH PRINCESS**--
AND I WILL NOT ALLOW
HER POISONOUS MAGIC
TO OVERSHADOW THE
KINGDOM I'VE FOUGHT
SO DEARLY TO
PROTECT!

DID YOU SAY
SOMETHING ABOUT
OVERSHADOW?











IF WE CAN KEEP THEM AT BAY, ONYX SHOULD BE ABLE TO REACH THE TEMPLE.

ONYX IS A WARRIOR BY BIRTH...



...SHE WILL NOT LET ME DOWN.

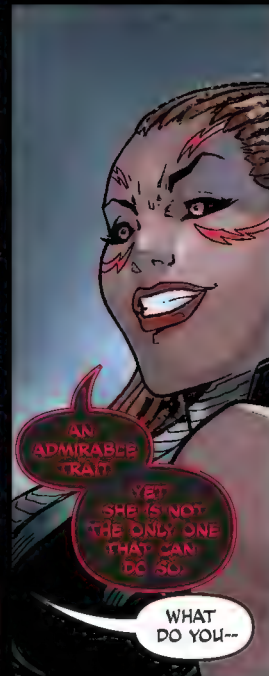
YOUR MAGIC IS QUITE STRONG-- I CAN SENSE IT.

WE COULD USE SOMEONE WITH YOUR ASSETS.



I AM NOT FOR SALE.

WHO SAID I WAS OFFERING.
ORLANA SIMPLY TAKES WHAT SHE WANTS.

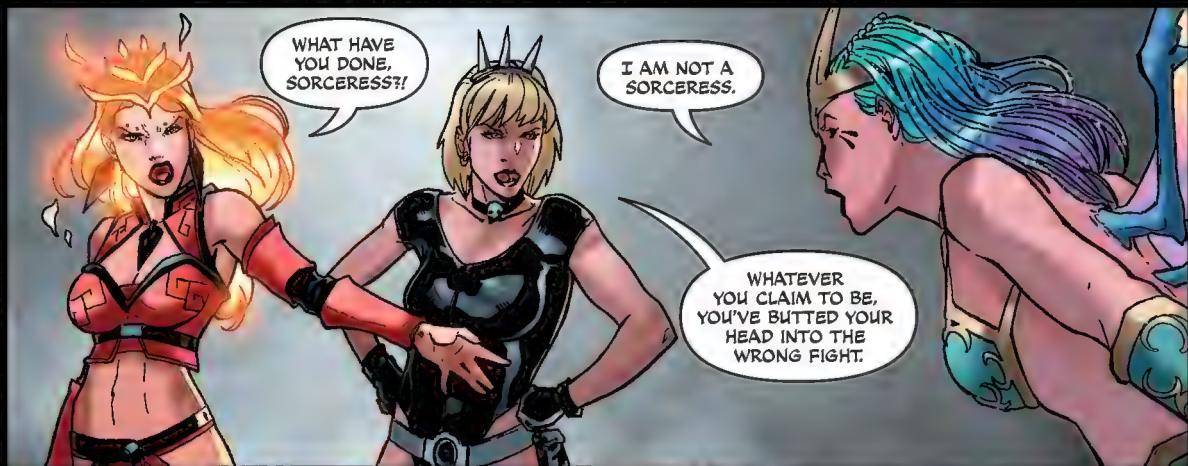


AN ADMIRABLE TRAIT.
YET SHE IS NOT THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN DO SO.
WHAT DO YOU--



--AGGGHH!

OLE HERE ALSO ENJOYS TAKING WHAT DOES NOT BELONG TO HIM-- SUCH AS MAGIC.



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, SORCERESS?!

I AM NOT A SORCERESS.

WHATEVER YOU CLAIM TO BE, YOU'VE BUTTED YOUR HEAD INTO THE WRONG FIGHT.



STOP. BOTH OF YOU-- YOU CAN FIGHT THE LYRICS.

I'VE TRIED, TERZA. THERE IS NO PATH BUT TO FOLLOW THEM.

SHE'S RIGHT. YOU MUST FIGHT IT. YOU ARE ALL BOUND TOGETHER BY THEM. BUT IF THE CHAIN LINK IS BROKEN--



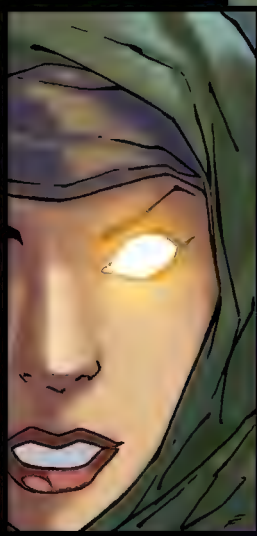
ENOUGH! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO END THIS. WE NEED TO GET TO THE SOURCE.

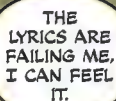


OH, GREAT. I KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.

HEY-- AT LEAST LET ME OUT OF HERE, FIRST!

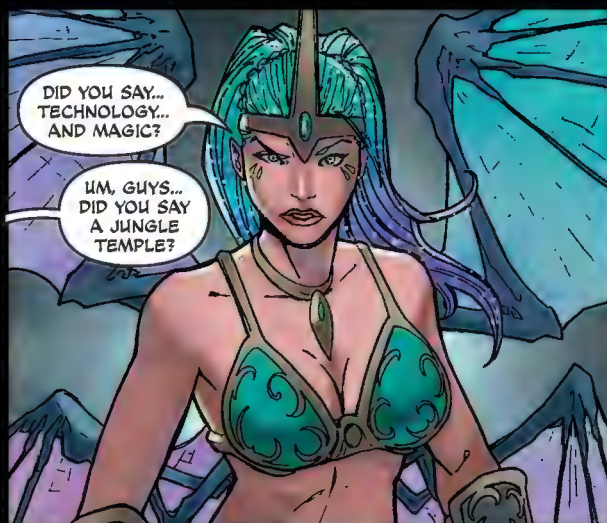
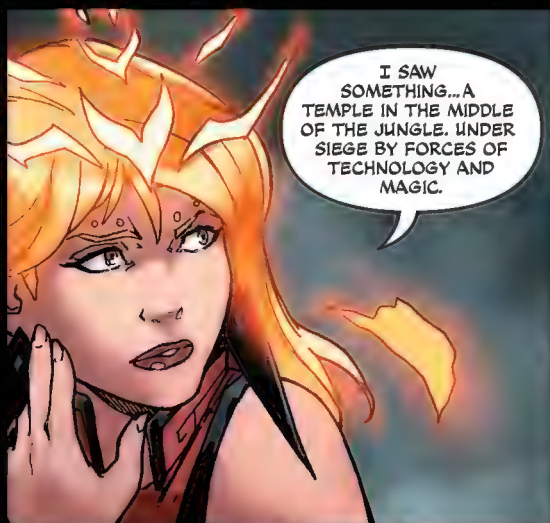


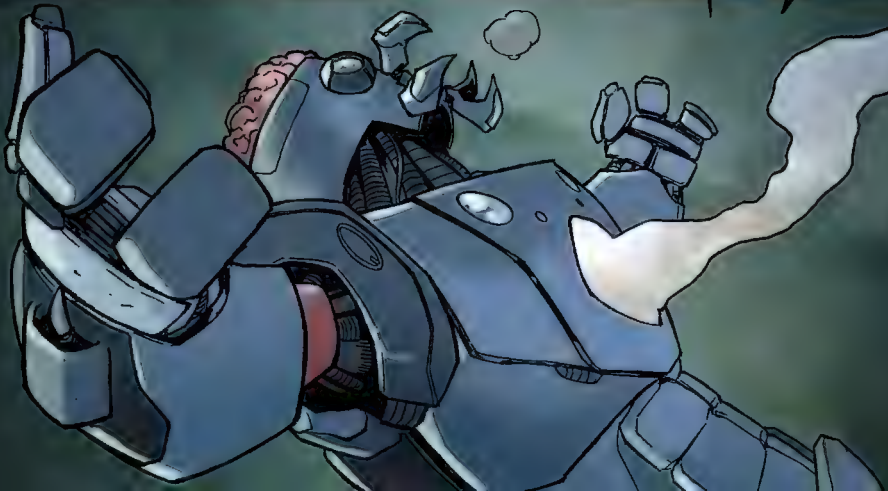
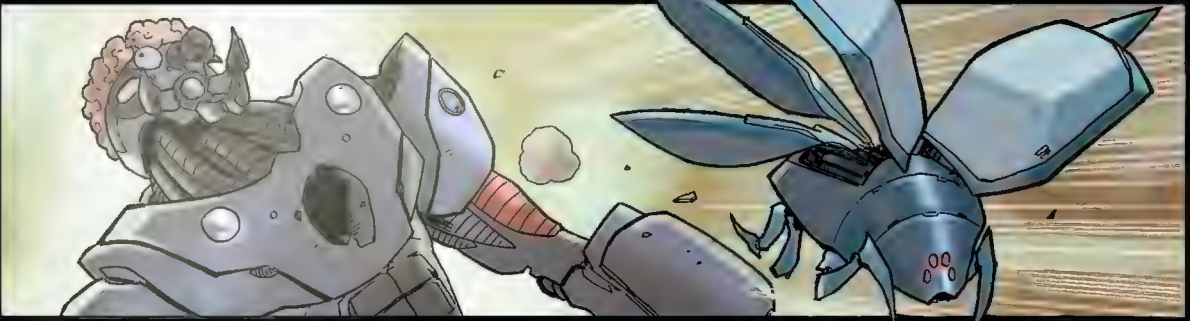
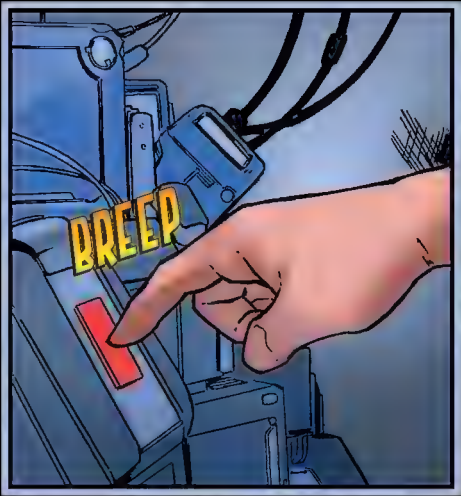


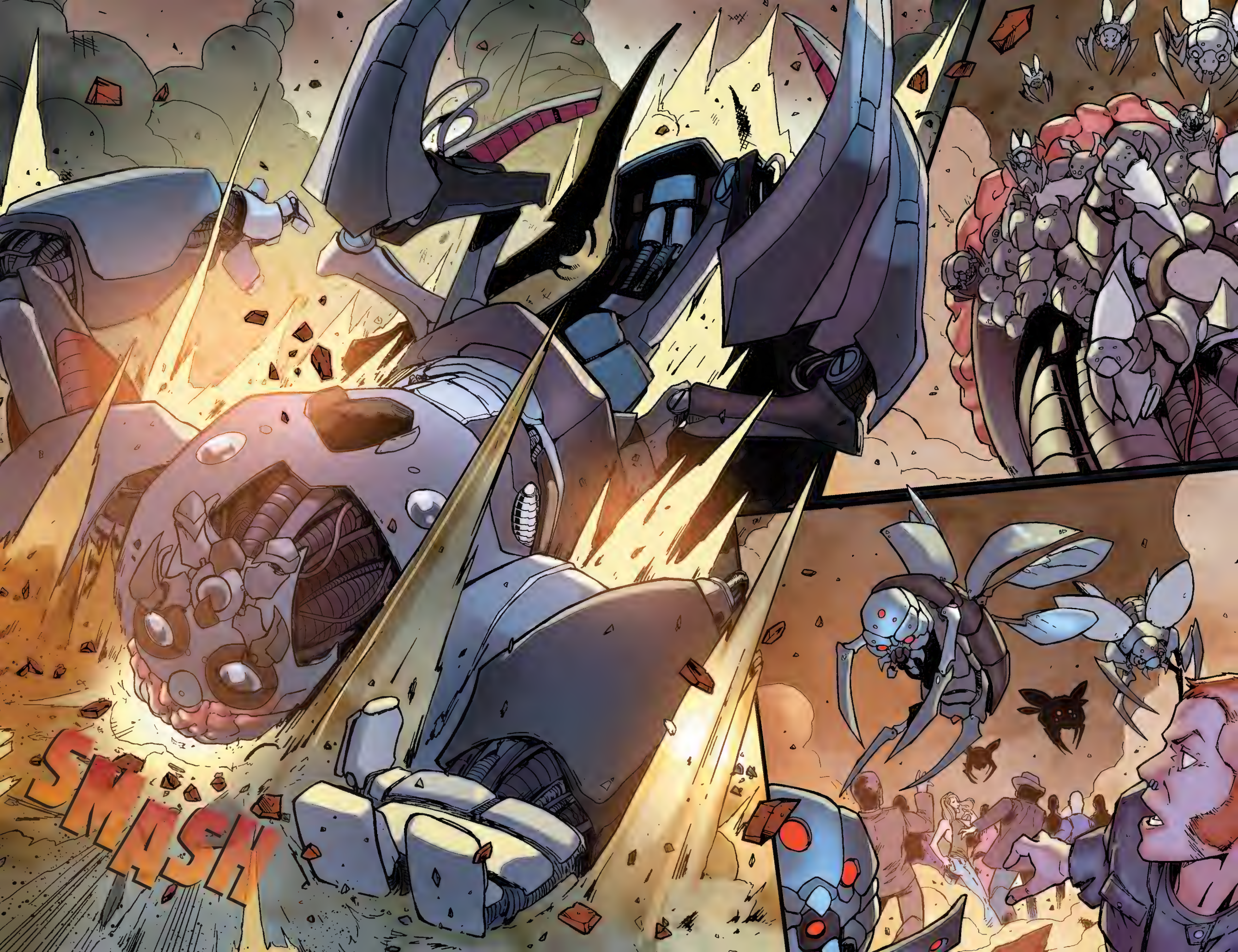


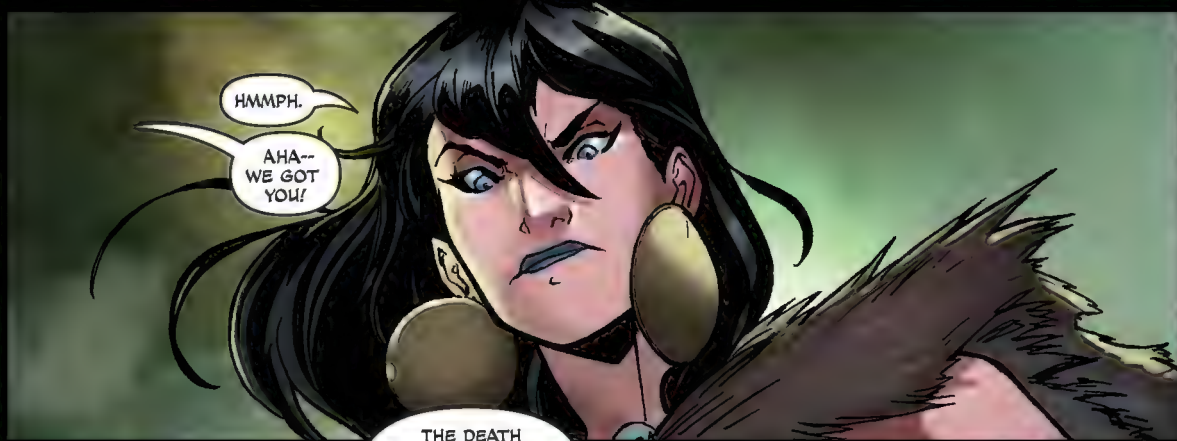












HMMMPH.

AHA--
WE GOT
YOU!

THE DEATH
PRINCESS, IN KON'S
TEMPLE, OF COURSE.
IT'S SO OBVIOUS
NOW THAT I THINK
ABOUT IT!



THE
MAGICIAN.
I SHOULD BE
THANKING YOU
FOR ALL OF
YOUR HELP.

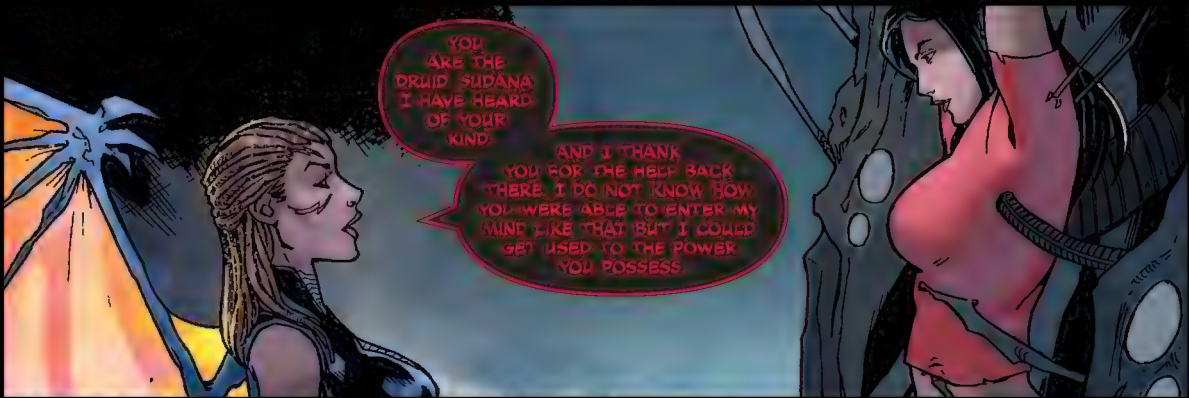


MAGIC IS
NOT A TOOL
TO BE USED FOR
TYRANNY. YOUR
TIME HAS COME
TO END THIS.



AH, BUT YOU
SEE THAT IS
WHERE YOU ARE
WRONG, *GRACE*
OF EMPYREA.

YOU THINK YOU
HAVE AMBUSHED ME,
BUT ONCE AGAIN YOU
HAVE FAILED TO SEE A
TRAP WHEN IT IS RIGHT
BEFORE YOUR OWN
TWO EYES.



YOU ARE THE DRUID SUDANA. I HAVE HEARD OF YOUR KIND.

AND I THANK YOU FOR THE HELP BACK THERE. I DO NOT KNOW HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO ENTER MY MIND LIKE THAT BUT I COULD GET USED TO THE POWER YOU POSSESS.



IT IS WHAT I DO. I KNEW EVANI COULD SIGNAL THE OTHERS IF GIVEN THE RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES. YOU WERE THAT CIRCUMSTANCE.



KRSSHH!



UNNH.



THANK YOU. I APPRECIATE IT.



I DO NOT THINK SO...



YOU
ARE ALL MY
PROPERTY...AND NOW
THE TRUE WAR
BEGINS.

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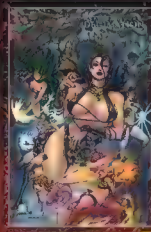
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Vince Hernandez

pencils
Marco Renna

digi-inks
Mark Roslan

color artists
Federico Blee
with **JUANCHO**
and **Enrica ANGIOLINI**

lettering
Zen

PREVIOUSLY:

The battle for humanity erupted in Costa Rica, as Rainier and his allies stormed Orlana's jungle temple—with Onyx entering by using Sudana's magic to momentarily stun Evani. Meanwhile, in the Everlands, Grace and her dragons brought Jayden and Terza to their senses in physical fashion. Hank, Ember and their group would eventually join them, and collectively they all vanished to the temple as well. Yet, even united, they were unable to breach the Death Princess' defenses, as they were all soon taken under Orlana's control...

ORLANA AKA: THE DEATH PRINCESS



Her conquest to rule the Earth using her ability to control minds failed once prior, yet not before the combined might of magic's greatest forces nearly reached their breaking point. The wizard Kon personally saw to her captivity within a slave camp, yet her devastating powers can never truly be diminished.

TERRA



The balance of good and evil requires a faithful demigod of death capable of feeding the seeds of chaos and ushering souls into the afterlife—or for her own keeping. Terra is the catalyst for Dellec's quest of vengeance as she ripped the heart from his wife's body as he bore witness, forging a path of blood and souls that continues today.

JAYDEN



After serving as a wedge between Malikai and Sonia's relationship, and eventually outcast from the group due to her malicious activities, Jayden was unknowingly trapped by the authorities and ultimately captured by Rainier's bounty hunter, Blackjack. Once under his control, she became a conduit for all of his torturous experiments.

TERZA



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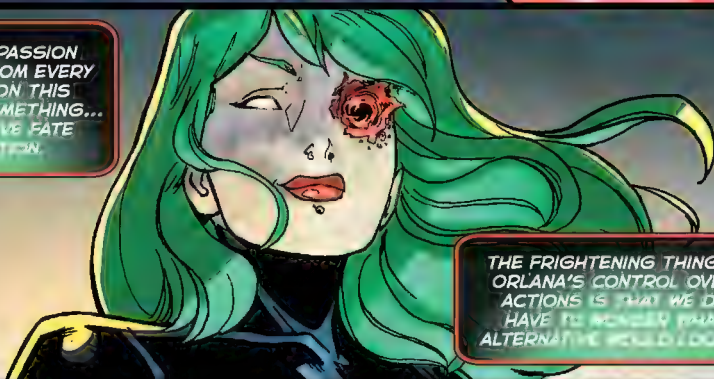
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T
OKYO, 2211.

TO GROW UP AS ROYALTY,
IT IS HARD NOT TO LOOK
DOWN UPON EVERYONE YOU
ENCOUNTER AS A LESSER
BEING. TO CONSIDER
OURSELVES SIMPLY MORTAL.



...BUT, IT IS OUR COMPASSION
THAT SEPARATES US FROM EVERY
OTHER LIVING THING ON THIS
EARTH. IT MAKES US SOMETHING...
MORE. THE ALTERNATIVE FATE
WOULD BE ORNATION.



THE FRIGHTENING THING ABOUT
ORLANA'S CONTROL OVER OUR
ACTIONS IS THAT WE DO NOT
HAVE TO WONDER WHAT THE
ALTERNATIVE WOULD LOOK LIKE...



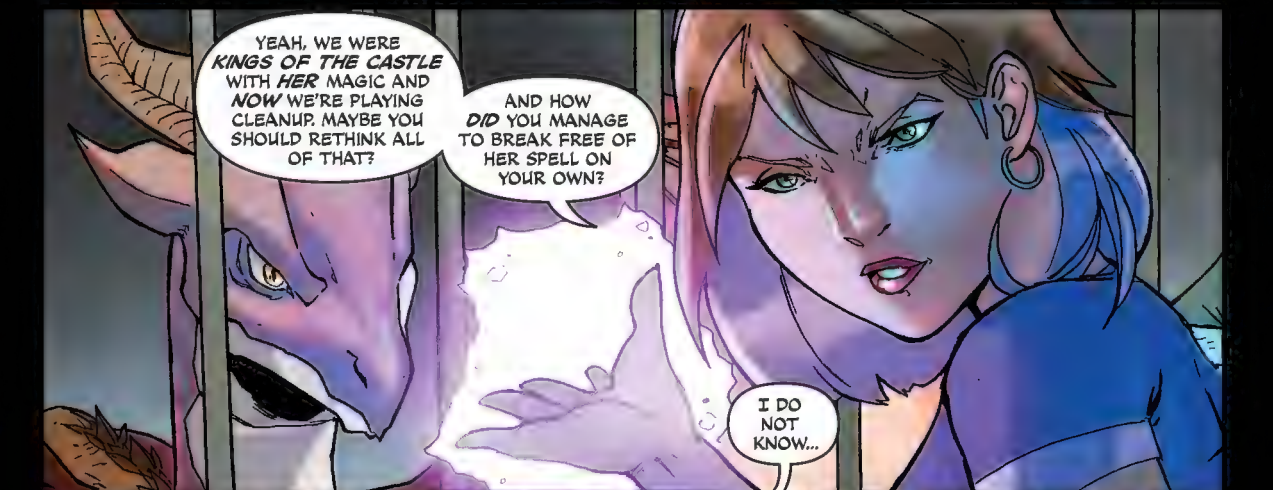


...DESTROYING THE MAGIC ALL AROUND US. WE MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE IN TAKING BACK OUR MINDS.

MAGIC, HUH? LAST I CHECKED YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE WATER PEOPLE, NOT ONE OF US.

THE WORD WAS NOT MEANT TO BE TAKEN LITERALLY.

BESIDES, IT WAS A POTENT FORM OF DARK MAGIC INFECTING ALL OF OUR MINDS, SO I BELIEVE I CAN SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE IN THAT REGARD.



YEAH, WE WERE **KINGS OF THE CASTLE** WITH HER MAGIC AND **NOW** WE'RE PLAYING CLEANUP. MAYBE YOU SHOULD RETHINK ALL OF THAT?

AND HOW **DID** YOU MANAGE TO BREAK FREE OF HER SPELL ON YOUR OWN?

I DO NOT KNOW...

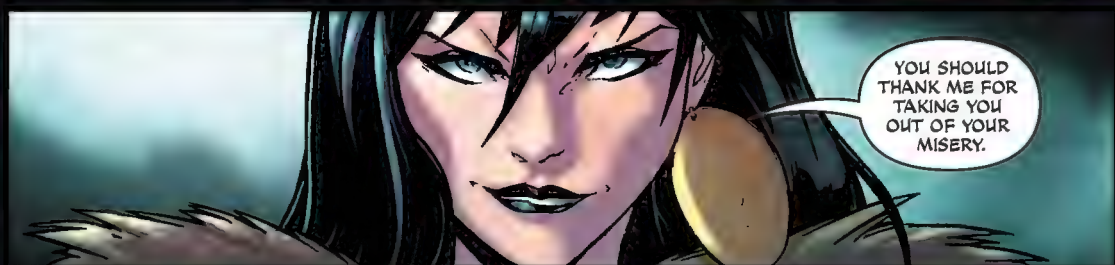
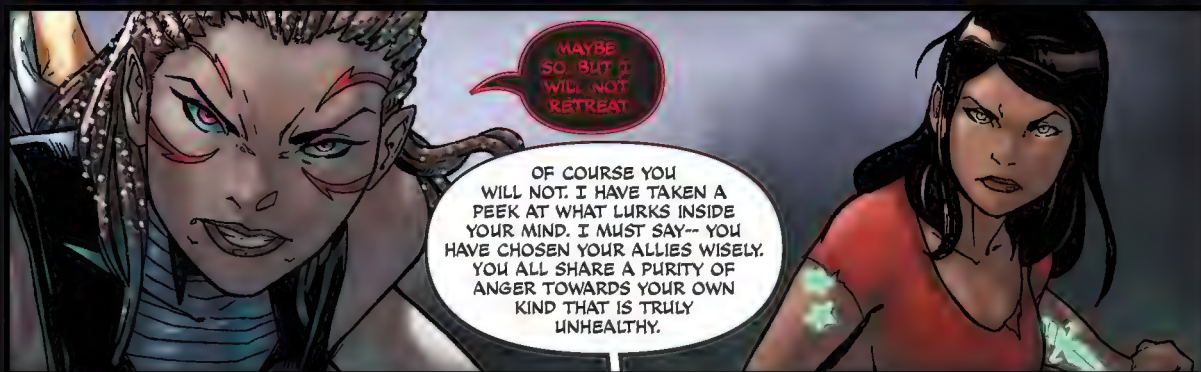


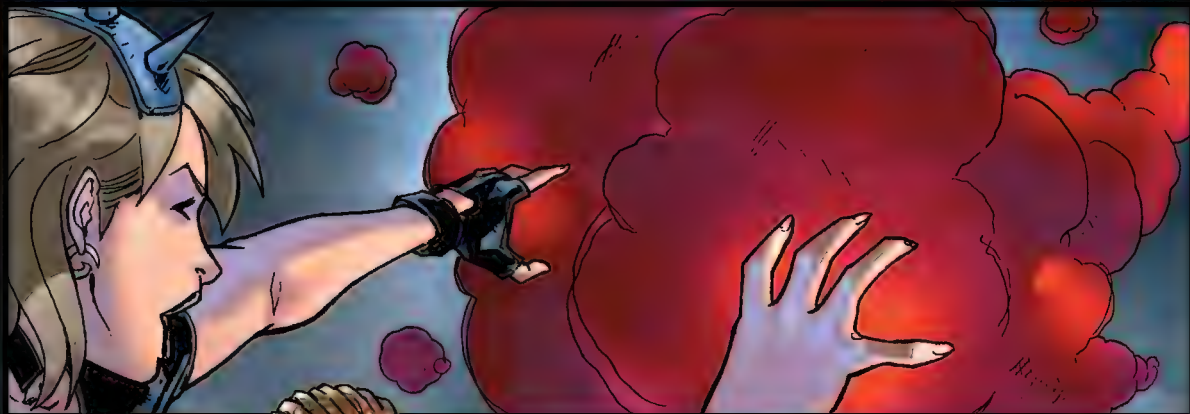
IN MY YOUTH I WAS QUITE HEADSTRONG TO BEGIN WITH, BUT I SUSPECT THERE ARE OTHER FORCES AT PLAY. I NEARLY DIED ONCE, AND WHEN I WAS RESURRECTED I CAME BACK...DIFFERENT... I CAN FEEL IT.

HMMPH. SO EVERYONE GETS TO LET LOOSE WITH THEIR POWERS AND REACH THEIR TRUE POTENTIAL BUT ME? I SEE HOW IT IS.

ONCE AGAIN YOU ARE WRONG. YOU CAN BE SOMETHING FAR GREATER THAN SIMPLY YOUR POWERS IF YOU JUST... GROW UP.

ALLOW ME TO PROVE IT TO YOU.







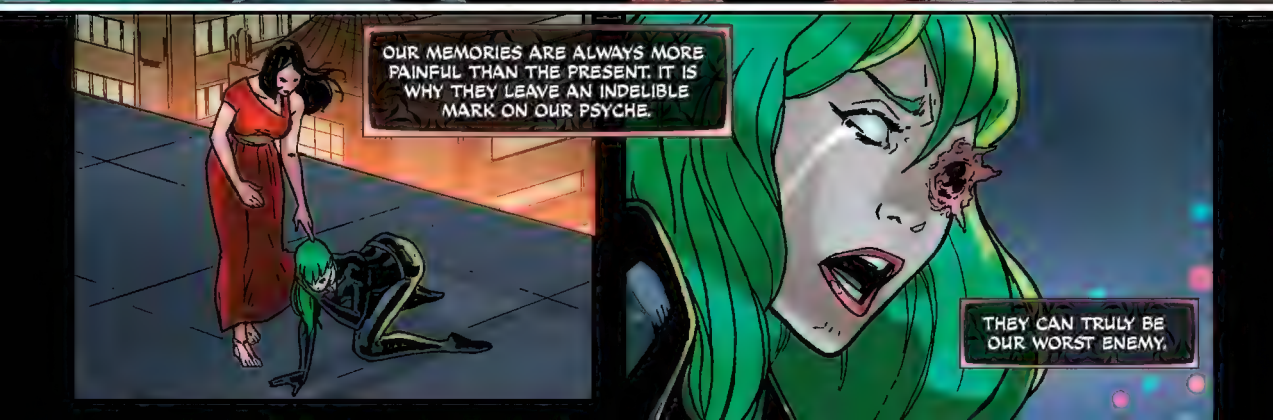
I HAVE DEALT WITH DEATH
IN SOME FORM OR FASHION
FOR MUCH OF MY EXISTENCE.

I SUPPOSE IT IS WHY I AM
STILL BREATHING, CONSIDERING
WHAT I HAVE LIVED THROUGH.
BUT, MY *FAITH* IS STRONG.

REN IS A MASTER OF COMBAT, BUT
COMBAT IS NOT THE ONLY OPTION
IN MATTERS OF LIFE OR DEATH. I
PREFER A MORE SUBTLE APPROACH.



A MORE...
CEREBRAL
APPROACH.



OUR MEMORIES ARE ALWAYS MORE
PAINFUL THAN THE PRESENT. IT IS
WHY THEY LEAVE AN INDELIBLE
MARK ON OUR PSYCHE.

THEY CAN TRULY BE
OUR WORST ENEMY.



TAKING A CAT'S ADVICE IN ORDER TO SAVE THE WORLD-- THIS IS A FIRST.



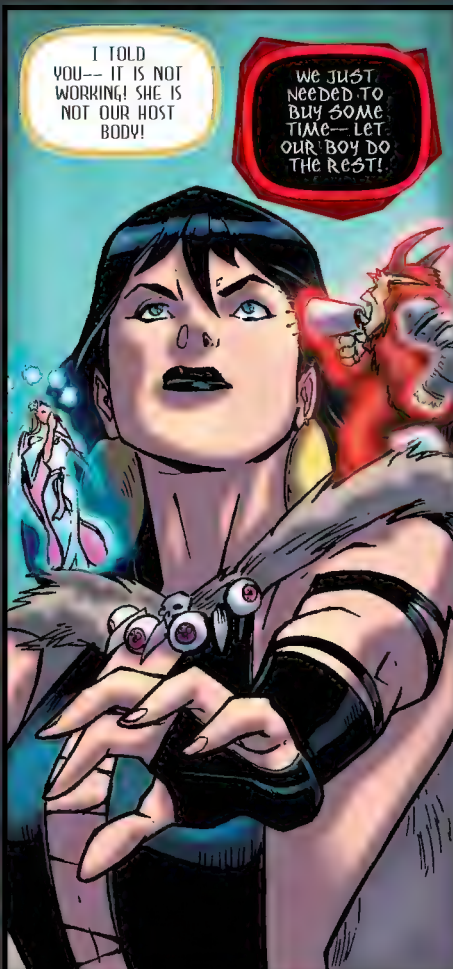
AH-- **THEODORE LANGSTROM**. YOU WERE A LOT MORE TROUBLE THAN YOU'RE WORTH. BUT I CAN'T HAVE YOU FREE THINKERS ROAMING AROUND. SUCH A NUISANCE.



YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET, YOU CREEPY-- YET STRANGELY HOT-- LADY!

THIS CANNOT WORRI!

WELL IF WE GO DOWN-- WE GO DOWN SWINGING, WOO, WOO!

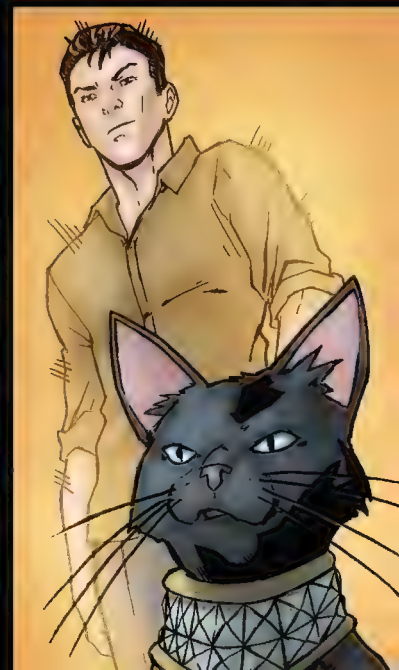


I TOLD YOU-- IT IS NOT WORKING! SHE IS NOT OUR HOST BODY!

WE JUST NEEDED TO BUY SOME TIME-- LET OUR BOY DO THE REST!

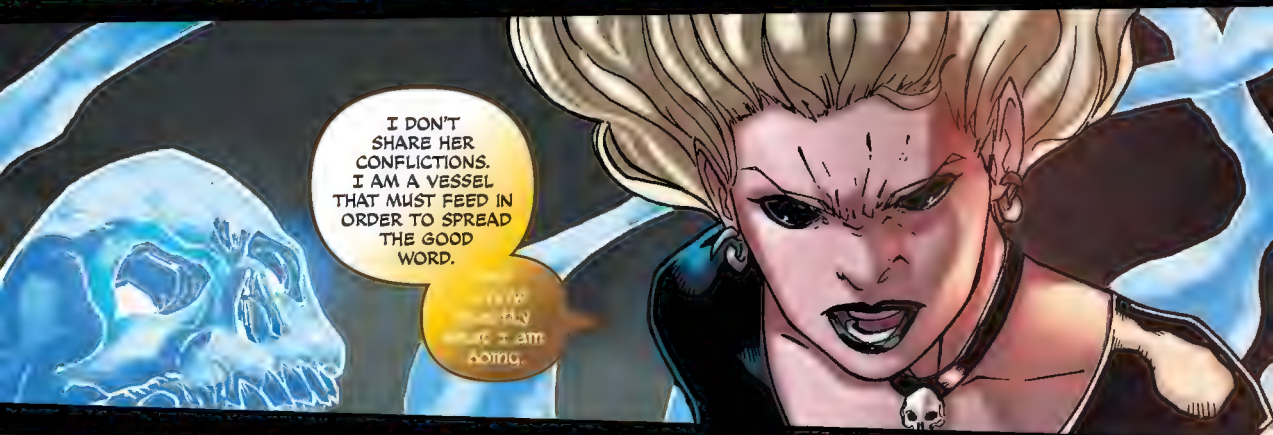


HEY, DUDE! TOTALLY SORRY ABOUT THIS, BUT HERE GOES--!













RAAAHHH!



HEY-- THAT'S MY GIRLFRIEND SHE'S TRYING TO FEED ON. YOU NEED TO STEP UP AND HELP!

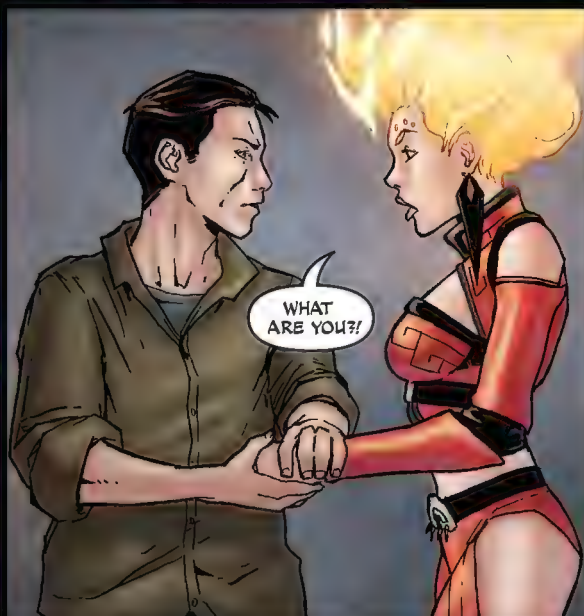


I TOLD YOU BEFORE I CAN'T HELP IT! WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO-- PUNCH ME TOO?!!



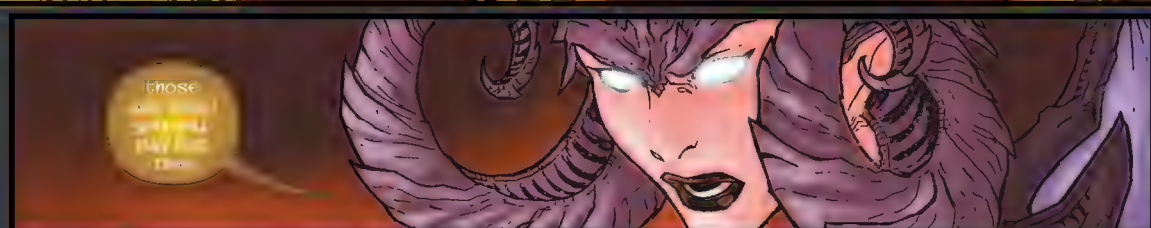
NO...THIS REQUIRES...

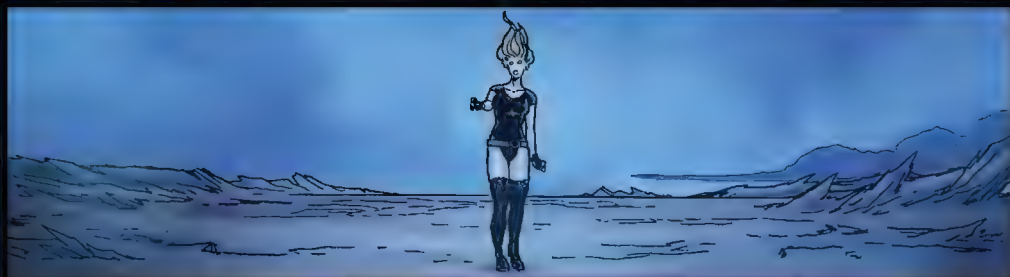
A MORE DELICATE APPROACH.

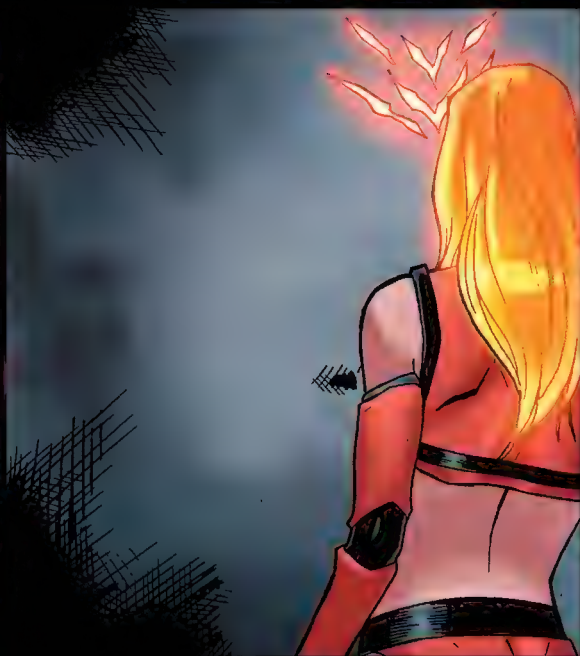


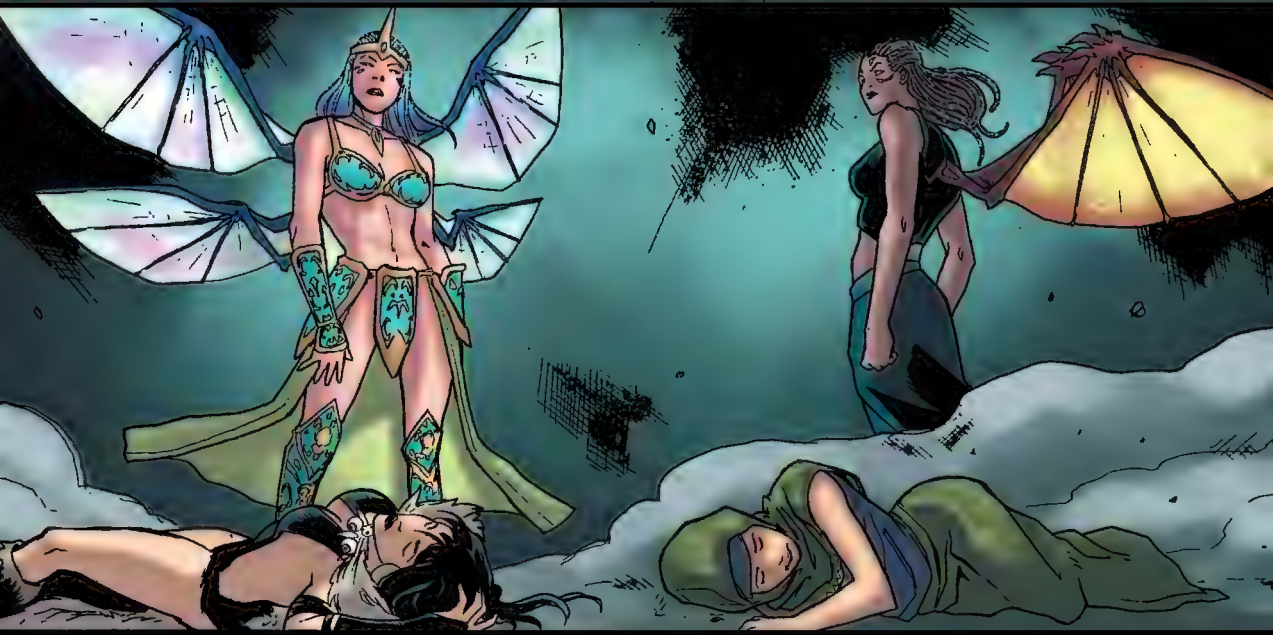
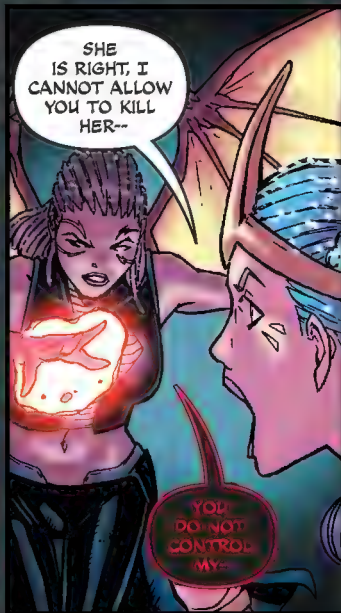
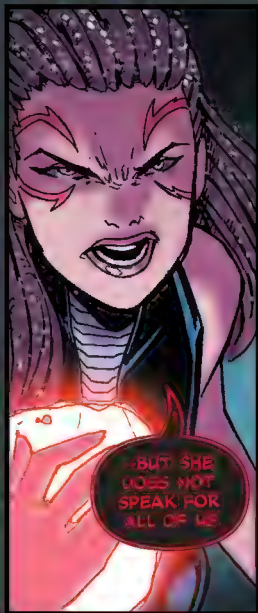
WHAT ARE YOU?!













SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 2211.

IT IS AS
FAINT AS A
WHISPER. IS
IT NOT?

BUT, IT IS
THERE.

AS IF
WE HAVE
LIVED IT.

I HAVE
CAPTURED AND
EXPERIMENTED UPON
COUNTLESS BEINGS
OF MAGIC, YET YOU
CONTINUE TO ASTONISH
ME WITH THE
UNKNOWN.

MEMORY IS
DIFFERENT FOR
US. IT IS ANOTHER
ASPECT OF WHAT
SEPARATES US FROM
HUMANKIND. IT IS NOT
MERELY THE PHYSICAL
DIFFERENCES... BUT
THE CEREBRAL
AS WELL...



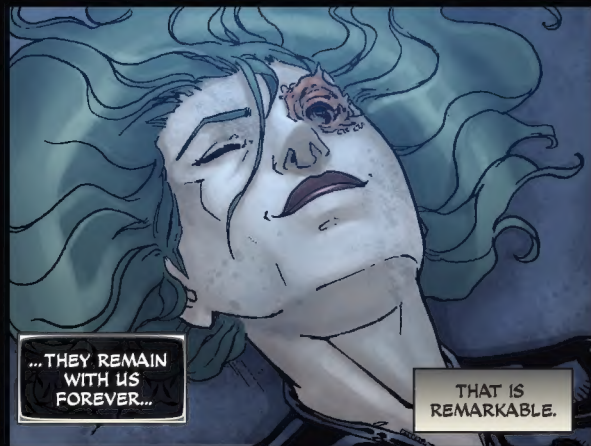
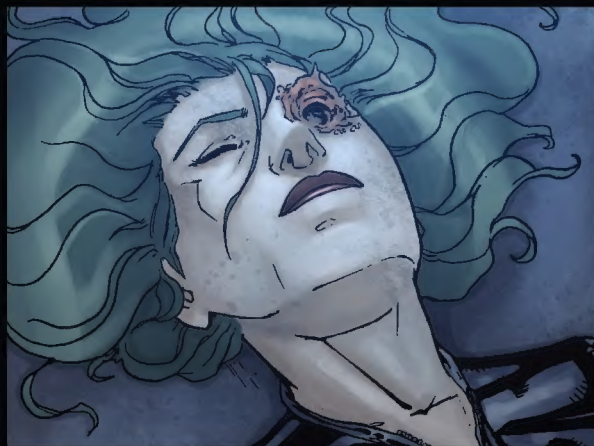
...OUR MINDS ARE
OFTENTIMES FAR
MORE POWERFUL
THAN OUR BODIES...



YET MORE
VULNERABLE
AS WELL.



WE FEEL EMOTIONS,
MEMORIES...DEEPER THAN
MOST. THEY REMAIN IN US
IN BOTH LIFE AND DEATH...

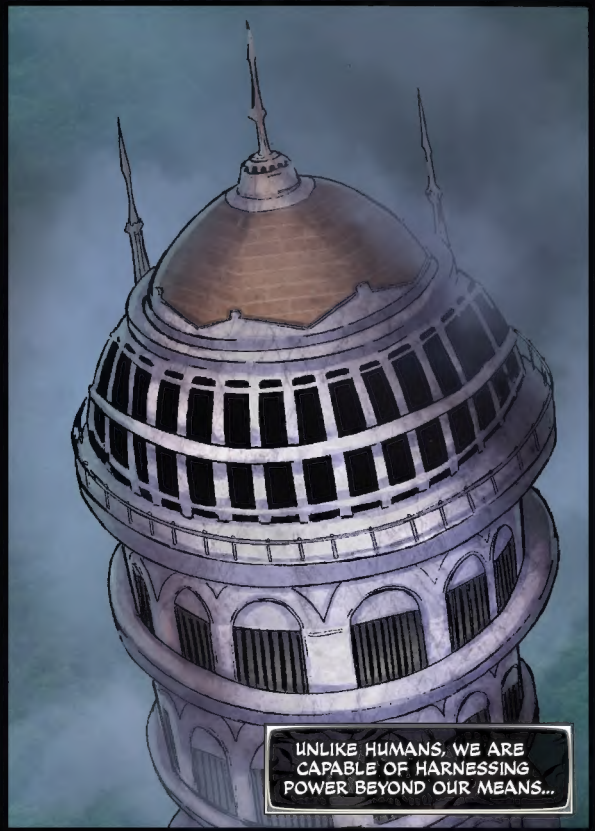


...THEY REMAIN
WITH US
FOREVER...

THAT IS
REMARKABLE.



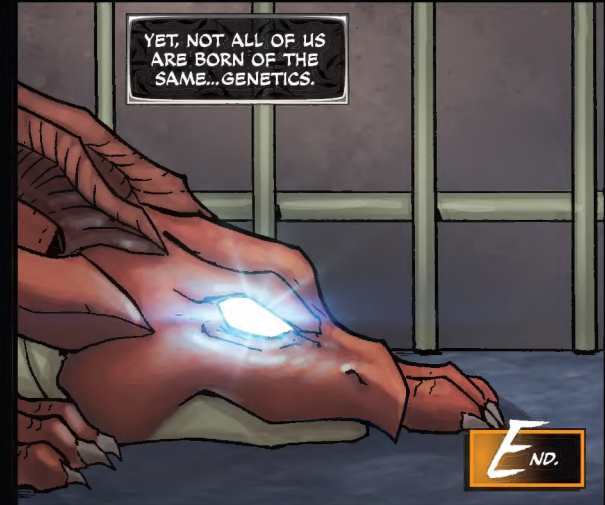
YES...AND
NO, MR. ABEL.



UNLIKE HUMANS, WE ARE
CAPABLE OF HARNESSING
POWER BEYOND OUR MEANS...



...HOWEVER, WE ARE
FRAGILE AS WELL...



YET, NOT ALL OF US
ARE BORN OF THE
SAME...GENETICS.